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

# Report of Inspection

Embassy Ottawa, Canada,  
and  
Constituent Posts

Report Number ISP-I-08-35A, August 2008

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## PURPOSE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY OF THE INSPECTION

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

### PURPOSE

- The Office of Inspections provides the Secretary of State, the Chairman of the BBG, and Congress with systematic and independent evaluations of the operations of the Department and the BBG. Inspections cover three broad areas, consistent with Section 209 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980:
- Policy Implementation: whether policy goals and objectives are being effectively achieved; whether U.S. interests are being accurately and effectively represented; and whether all elements of an office or mission are being adequately coordinated.
- Resource Management: whether resources are being used and managed with maximum efficiency, effectiveness, and economy and whether financial transactions and accounts are properly conducted, maintained, and reported.
- Management Controls: whether the administration of activities and operations meets the requirements of applicable laws and regulations; whether internal management controls have been instituted to ensure quality of performance and reduce the likelihood of mismanagement; whether instance of fraud, waste, or abuse exist: and whether adequate steps for detection, correction, and prevention have been taken.

### METHODOLOGY

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



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

*Office of Inspector General*

PREFACE

This report was prepared by the Office of Inspector General (OIG) pursuant to the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, and Section 209 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980, as amended. It is one of a series of audit, inspection, investigative, and special reports prepared by OIG periodically as part of its responsibility to promote effective management, accountability and positive change in the Department of State and the Broadcasting Board of Governors.

This report is the result of an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the office, post, or function under review. It is based on interviews with employees and officials of relevant agencies and institutions, direct observation, and a review of applicable documents.

The recommendations therein have been developed on the basis of the best knowledge available to the OIG and, as appropriate, have been discussed in draft with those responsible for implementation. It is my hope that these recommendations will result in more effective, efficient, and/or economical operations.

I express my appreciation to all of those who contributed to the preparation of this report.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "H. W. Geisel".

Harold W. Geisel  
Acting Inspector General

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## KEY JUDGMENTS

- The Ambassador makes the unwieldy command and coordination structure of the U.S. Mission to Canada function effectively through sheer diligence and perseverance. Drawing upon his excellent rapport with Canadian government decision makers and his highly effective public diplomacy activities, the Ambassador has improved the image of the United States held by Canadians.
- Interagency coordination, while complicated by the proliferation of U.S. federal agencies represented in Canada, remains robust and collegial, with one exception, the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Customs and Border Protection (CBP) preclearance.
- The DHS CBP preclearance sites across Canada, while under chief of mission control, continue to operate as virtually autonomous entities, raising questions as to Embassy Ottawa's responsibility for security and internal control measures at these sites.
- Substantive reporting performed by the embassy is comprehensive and highly valued by Washington readers, but the mix of formal and informal reporting channels should be reexamined. Reporting from the constituent posts varies greatly in both volume and quality.
- Under the guidance of the Ambassador and the deputy chief of mission (DCM) the mission has been very effective in advocacy of U.S. government policy objectives. The Ambassador has been a vigorous supporter of U.S. business interests in Canada; he is held in high esteem by the business community.
- Funding for public diplomacy activities in Canada is so low that many opportunities to influence attitudes of key constituencies go unutilized. Public affairs officers make excellent use of target of opportunity speakers/events to fill funding gaps.



## CONTEXT

The relationship between the United States and Canada is arguably the closest and most extensive in the world. It is reflected in the staggering volume of bilateral trade – the equivalent of \$1.5 billion a day in two-way trade in goods and services



– as well as in people-to-people contact. About 300,000 people cross the shared border each day; Toronto’s airport, with preclearance operations, ranks as the fourth largest U.S. “domestic” point of entry, trailing New York, Los Angeles,

and Miami. The most salient feature of the relationship is its sheer size, whether measured in terms of undefended border, cross border trade and investment, energy integration, border crossings, military interoperability, or law enforcement cooperation.

Despite leading a minority government, Prime Minister Stephen Harper and his Conservative party have been successful in accomplishing many of his priorities, including making good on his promise to create a more productive relationship with the United States. Highest on that list has been maintaining Canada’s extended military commitment in Afghanistan. Canada has taken decisive, principled positions in multilateral bodies, repeatedly standing with the United States on issues of human rights, proliferation, Middle East peace, Sudan, and Haiti.

Especially vital to American economic and national security interests is that the United States and Canada enjoy the largest energy trade relationship in the world. Canada is the single largest foreign supplier of energy to the United States; it ranks as the largest supplier of both crude oil (17 percent of U.S. imports) and natural gas

(more than 85 percent of U.S. imports). Canada is a major supplier of electricity to the United States, and the two countries operate an integrated electricity grid that provides almost all of each other's electricity imports.

Success in the global partnership has motivated both countries to address bilateral irritants. Political will, at the highest level, was instrumental in achieving resolution of the longstanding softwood lumber trade dispute. The northern border reopened to Canadian cattle following resolution of issues stemming from discovery of cattle infected with mad cow disease. Sustained efforts across Mission Canada have enabled smooth implementation of new requirements for travel between the two countries, despite deep skepticism in Canada. However, as is to be expected in such a broad and deep relationship, irritants still remain, such as the impact of water releases from North Dakota's Devils Lake into the Red River which flows into Canada, and intellectual property rights issues regarding Canada's copyright law.

The United States and Canada share the world's longest undefended border, but managing border issues is the greatest bilateral challenge. A vigorous Canadian immigration policy has attracted a growing number of immigrants from nontraditional sources such as Asia, Africa, Central America, and the Caribbean; equally significant has been the unprecedented influx of refugees from the developing world. As a result, only roughly 45 percent of the Canadian population is now of "traditional" British/French ancestry. The reality of a multicultural Canada creates workload complexities for Mission Canada operations, particularly in the areas of consular affairs, security, and political-military cooperation.

Embassy Ottawa's top priority is to assist in the creation of a modern, secure, and efficient border, contributing to protection of the U.S. homeland while ensuring the continued flow of legitimate trade and travel that is vital to the U.S. and Canadian economies. Over half of the U.S. government's direct-hire personnel serving in Canada are from DHS. Passport requirements for land border crossings, which have been delayed at least until June 2009, loom largest of the new initiatives along the border. Coordinating emergency preparedness to react to a terrorist act continues as a major focus, especially as the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver draw closer. The mission has established close, productive relations with Canadian law enforcement agencies to combat drug, gun, and human trafficking and other related cross-border criminal activities.

Another mission priority is strengthening military and diplomatic partnerships with Canada. The mission has supported the Canadian military operations in Afghanistan by exchanging information, identifying logistical and equipment requirements, and encouraging other North Atlantic Treaty Organization allies to assume more of the burden in Kandahar. It has also urged Canada to redouble its nation

building outreach. The mission has worked with Canada to determine the way forward for the maritime mission of the renewed North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD – the world’s only binational military command and a success for 50 years), as well as for Canada Command’s relationship to its counterpart, U.S. Northern Command (NORTHCOM).

The mission supports bilateral and – with Mexico through the Security and Prosperity Partnership – trilateral initiatives to deepen North American economic integration. Mission efforts have focused on energy security through increasing integration of energy systems and seeking commercial partnerships in clean energy, reducing regulatory differences and border delays, and improving protection for intellectual property rights to expand cross-border trade and investment. Intense and effective cooperation with Canada on a wide array of environmental issues has been critical to mutual prosperity, particularly regarding climate change issues.

Implementing this ambitious bilateral agenda requires close coordination among all agencies and constituent posts. To accomplish this, the United States has an embassy in Ottawa, consulates general in Toronto, Vancouver, Montreal, Calgary, Quebec City, and Halifax, as well as an American presence post in Winnipeg. Given the size of the bilateral relationship, Mission Canada remains a remarkably lean organization, with just over 1,100 employees located in the embassy, consulates general, eight airport preclearance operations, and Canadian military facilities. Mission Canada hosts numerous federal cabinet departments and agencies, including Defense; Commerce; Agriculture; Treasury (Internal Revenue Service); Homeland Security including Coast Guard, CBP, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Transportation Security, and Secret Service; and Justice including Federal Bureau of Investigation, Drug Enforcement Administration, and Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms.



## EXECUTIVE DIRECTION

### Leadership

The resources of the U.S. Mission to Canada are stretched thinly from Consulate General Halifax on the Atlantic Ocean to Consulate General Vancouver on the Pacific West Coast. The Ambassador and DCM sit at the top of a flat management structure that forces them to work directly with each of the 20 plus constituent agencies represented in Canada. Charged with the responsibility for policy coordination among all U.S. Cabinet departments and agencies represented in Canada, with protection of both sensitive U.S. Government information and direct-hire staff under Chief of Mission control, as well as the responsibility to ensure implementation of internal controls, this particular Ambassador and DCM make the command and policy coordination system function effectively through sheer diligence and perseverance. They are fortunate to have experienced officers assigned as heads of agencies, most of whom understand the role of the Ambassador and the need to coordinate policy decisions. Each head of agency interviewed by the Office of Inspector General (OIG) team indicated that the Ambassador and DCM keep a strong focus on policy coordination and they make themselves available whenever time sensitive issues require the Ambassador's guidance.

### Interagency Coordination

Interagency coordination is less effective in the application of the regional security program and oversight of internal controls, in particular with regard to the DHS CBP preclearance sites across Canada. OIG inspection reports dating as far back as 1995 have discussed the fact that these preclearance sites, while technically under Chief of Mission authority, operate as virtually autonomous entities. The Ambassador and DCM, working closely with the consuls general at the constituent posts, have tried to improve the flow of information from the preclearance staff – numbering more than 500 American direct-hire positions – to the Ambassador. The CBP preclearance staff interviewed in the course of this inspection indicated that their primary guidance and policy coordination point is the CBP preclearance office in Washington. Coordination with the Ambassador in Ottawa, and often with the CBP attaché in Ottawa is a secondary, though important, goal for them. In some cases they pass information on activities with possible impact on U.S. Government policy

goals to the consul general of a constituent post for transmittal to the embassy. In other cases they pass such information to the CBP attaché in Ottawa. CBP staff at one preclearance site stated that when they consult on cases with the DHS ICE attaché, they assume that the ICE attaché takes on responsibility for briefing the appropriate embassy authorities. The recent addition of a DHS attaché to the country team gives the Ambassador a new tool to improve information flow from the five (soon to be six) DHS constituent agencies operating in Canada.

**Recommendation 1:** Embassy Ottawa should task the Department of Homeland Security attaché to develop an action plan to coordinate among all Department of Homeland Security constituent agencies operating in Canada the flow of information needed by the Ambassador to fulfill his responsibilities as chief of mission. (Action: Embassy Ottawa)

## Regional Security Program

The Ambassador and DCM view the security of sensitive information and the safety of the staff members as their highest priorities. The Ambassador chairs the emergency action committee, and the DCM chairs the counterintelligence working group. The regional security officer (RSO) enjoys full and frequent access to both whenever needed. The OIG team noted, however, that while security is very high on the Ambassador's agenda, some Department of State (Department) staff in both Washington and across Mission Canada perceived that Canada was unlikely to be a terrorist target. This can lead to a sense of complacency and an assumption that Canada is a benign environment where crime, terrorism, and intelligence threat concerns are greatly diminished. This perception, along with Canada's proximity to the United States, and the close bilateral ties, leads some Washington-based staff to the conclusion that other U.S. missions are at greater risk than those in Canada. As a result, Mission Canada tends to receive less than its fair share of the limited security resources available. The annex to this inspection report will discuss security program deficiencies and vulnerabilities that warrant corrective action.

The Ambassador, while fully supportive of the regional security program, was not aware that the DHS staff working at the CBP preclearance sites should receive an equitable level of security support as compared to Department and other agency staff working at the embassy or at the consulates general. CBP directors at the preclearance sites take the position that CBP is responsible for the administrative details and security of the staff. To be fair to this Ambassador, the debate between the



so many regularly-scheduled internal meetings and believe that the high ratings given to the Ambassador by his staff are in no small part a result of the transparent and inclusive nature of his operating style. However, the organization of these meetings could be improved to make them more focused on specific Mission Strategic Plan (MSP) goals. The OIG team discussed with the Ambassador and DCM ways to do so, such as setting specific agendas, keeping minutes of actions tasked, and sharing results with appropriately cleared staff at the constituent posts.

## Mission Strategic Plan Process

The Ambassador and DCM chaired the MSP drafting process during the inspection, giving the OIG team an opportunity to view the mission front office in action. The goals outlined in the mission's submission were on target and reflected the participation of the many U.S. agencies with resources dedicated to Canada. The embassy shared the draft MSP with the constituent posts and held a town hall meeting, with the participation of the consulates general via digital videoconference (DVC), to get final comments from all embassy sections and other agencies. The OIG team found the process to be inclusive and properly targeted on those issues of greatest concern to the United States:

- the development of a modern, secure border that protects U.S. national security while ensuring the continued flow of legitimate trade and travel;
- strengthening U.S.-Canadian global political and military partnership – most notably in Afghanistan;
- strengthening law enforcement cooperation;
- enhancing North American integration;
- cooperating with Canada on environmental issues;
- improving the image of the United States among Canadians; and
- continual improvement in the efficiency of management procedures and processes.

## Advocacy

Under the guidance of the Ambassador and DCM, this mission has been very effective in advocacy of U.S. government policy objectives. For example, the Ambassador has been personally active in pressing the Canadian Government to pass and implement legislation to enforce intellectual property rights (IPR). He has not hesitated to recommend that the U.S. Government take measures designed to make noncompliance by the Canadians painful. At the same time, he has vigorously supported U.S. business interests in Canada and has earned the respect and admiration of the business community.

## Public Diplomacy

Canadians tend to define themselves as “not American.” Like a small quiet family living next door to a large boisterous family, Canadians find that U.S. domestic and international policy decisions have a disproportionate impact on the average Canadian’s life. For example, when the United States decided to move to daylight savings time earlier than had been the case in previous years, Canada felt obliged to follow for fear of disrupting trade and travel between the two countries, even though its more northern location meant that there would not be any energy savings in Canada. The Ambassador has spared no effort to change the way the average Canadian views his/her noisy neighbor down south. He has charmed Canadians ranging from the professional media to politicians with his down home country style, while his astute public diplomacy skills have led many Canadian contacts to comment that behind the Ambassador’s southern drawl there is a mind like a steel trap. He has been successful in changing the dynamic in the bilateral dialogue by channeling the public’s focus to areas of agreement such as the U.S. partnership in Afghanistan.

## Morale

Morale at Mission Canada is generally quite good. Putting aside the severe winter weather and Canada’s domestic problems with service delivery in their state-run medical system, staff members interviewed by the OIG team and those who completed the OIG questionnaires reported general satisfaction with the quality of life issues under the direct control of the U.S. Mission to Canada.

## Entry-Level Officers

One area that could use some additional attention, however, is the administration of the entry-level officer (ELO) program. The ELOs interviewed expressed a desire for a more formalized program with the assignment of mentors, additional career enhancing activities, and more access to training and consultation. The OIG team made an informal recommendation that the embassy develop a mission-wide ELO program.

## RIGHTSIZING

The OIG team reviewed the positions listed on the staffing records of the U.S. Mission to Canada and found one activity that could be conducted from within the United States without a significant degradation in its overall responsibilities. The U.S. Department of Defense conducts a valuable exchange program with Canadian Forces. U.S. military officers from each of the services are integrated into Canadian Forces for an extended period under the Personnel Exchange Program (PEP). The U.S. regional military command (NORTHCOM) has responsibility for the force protection of the PEP officers, who are located across the length and breadth of Canada at various Canadian Forces bases. The PEP program is administered differently by each of the U.S. military services. Some administer the program from a U.S. military facility in the United States but others, the U.S. Air Force (USAF) in particular, have accredited USAF personnel to the embassy in Ottawa specifically to administer this program. The OIG team was not able to find a reason why these staff members needed to be based outside of the United States in order to run this program.

The high cost to the U.S. taxpayers of maintaining direct-hire positions overseas and the ever-present security threat to each American staff member working for U.S. missions abroad makes it particularly important that staffing levels be kept to the bare minimum needed to perform high priority U.S. government objectives. Any low priority work, or work that could be accomplished from a domestic work base or from a regional center should be removed from U.S. missions overseas.

**Recommendation 2:** Embassy Ottawa should request the Department of Defense to relocate the Personnel Exchange Program staff from Embassy Ottawa to an appropriate U.S. military facility in the United States. (Action: Embassy Ottawa)

In addition to the position reductions recommended above, the OIG team concluded that both the substantive reporting program at the constituent posts and the mission-wide security program need additional human resources in order to meet mandated responsibilities. In light of the worldwide shortage of Foreign Service officers, it is not likely that Mission Canada will be able to get the additional RSOs needed for the security program. As an alternative, the OIG team made an informal recommendation that the embassy seek to create local-hire cleared American positions to perform these security duties. This will be discussed in more depth in the security section of the annex report. The large constituent posts could make excellent use of additional Foreign Service national reporting and analysis positions. This is discussed in more detail in the constituent post reporting section of this report.

Finally, the OIG team found that the ICASS support staffing has fallen far behind the level needed to support the number of positions currently authorized to work in Canada. Partly this is due to the embassy's historic failure to issue partial-year ICASS invoices upon approval of new other agency positions, and partly this is due to the Department's inability to increase the total ICASS budget for Canada due to its own budgetary shortfalls. Embassy Ottawa participated in a formal rightsizing exercise and will be required to provide the Department with a status report on the results of their study in this fiscal year, 2008. That particular rightsizing exercise, however, did not involve a position by position justification by each agency maintaining staff in Canada, nor did it result in a list of all positions in priority order based on their relevance to the MSP goals and objectives for Canada. If Mission Canada is to perform its mandated administrative/security support functions and to ensure proper internal controls of U.S. government resources, assuming that the ICASS support budget is static or decreasing, the number of staff to be supported must be decreased.

**Recommendation 3:** Embassy Ottawa should perform a baseline review of all programs and staffing authorized under chief of mission control, including the following elements: require each agency to present a justification for the need to operate programs in country and the need for each authorized position; create a priority list for staffing to decide which positions can no longer be justified in light of the Mission Strategic Plan goals and objectives and the limited financial resources allocated to the U.S. Mission to Canada. (Action: Embassy Ottawa)

## Law Enforcement Working Group

The Ambassador and DCM view security as an essential part of the mission and lead several of the security related regular meetings. The RSO enjoys full access to the Ambassador and DCM, and the Ambassador invites the senior RSO to attend high-level representational functions at the residence. The Ambassador seeks out constituent posts' RSOs during his frequent visits and is keenly interested in discussing security issues with them.

## POLICY AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

### ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

#### Reporting and Analysis

Washington consumers praised Embassy Ottawa for reporting on economic/environment, science and technology, and health (ESTH), during OIG inspection survey discussions. One Washington agency lauded energy-related reporting from Consulate General Calgary, while another praised Embassy Ottawa reporting on IPR protection issues. The OIG team examined reporting from Embassy Ottawa and determined that post effectively and comprehensively covered all economic and environmental bases and found no deficiencies. The economic/ESTH section has made excellent use of its two locally employed (LE) staff members; both make significant contributions to section reporting. In addition to excellent front channel reporting, the section engages in extensive informal communications with Washington agencies by means of e-mail and telephone.

Mission Canada's three-part November 2007 series on the U.S.-Canadian border is a useful reference tool for Washington policymakers and represents a tour de force in reporting on one of the most important issues in the bilateral relationship. These insightful reports provided agencies not only with key conclusions, but also detailed a number of specific recommendations flowing from those conclusions. The embassy's cable recommending that Canada be elevated to Priority Watch List status because of weaknesses in IPR protection was a model of analysis. The Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs (WHA) commended the economic/ESTH section in November 2007 for its reports on the border, Canadian Arctic initiatives, IPR, Canadian dollar appreciation, regional economic growth, and bulk water exports.

In a creative attempt to harness new technologies and methods of communication to convey real time spot reporting of key economic and environmental events in Canada, the section in spring 2007 initiated the Canada Economic and Environmental Forum web log "blog" on the Department's Intranet system. Since its inception,

section members have contributed hundreds of messages to the blog. Consumer response to the blog has been minimal, however. The economic/ESTH section continues to assess the value of this form of communication and is exploring other options, such as a direct e-mail newsletter, to reach the wide ranging consumers of Mission Canada's reporting products.

## Operations and Advocacy

During the inspection's survey period discussions, Department offices and U.S. Government agencies were unanimous in expressing their praise and appreciation for Mission Canada support, and invariably described Mission Canada economic section members as responsive and helpful. One agency conveyed its deep appreciation for section assistance in reaching agreement on a bilateral treaty and for section support for the visit to Canada of that agency's Secretary. Another agency expressed, in glowing terms, appreciation for Mission Canada's continued engagement and support on IPR protection and resolution of the softwood lumber dispute.

The economic/ESTH section is top-heavy; three of the six officers in the section have supervisory responsibilities, and the most junior position in the section is graded at the FS-03 level. Given the breadth, depth, scope, and complexity of the U.S.-Canadian bilateral economic relationship, as well as the multiplicity of U.S. Government actors involved in various economic issues, however, all positions appear to be graded at the appropriate level. Nevertheless, the OIG team made an informal recommendation that Embassy Ottawa review section staffing/portfolios with a view toward enhancing section management and consolidating/reducing bureaucratic layers.

The section works closely with CBP on implementation of border security measures and assists CBP with preclearance issues; it has also assisted in the introduction of CBP's CSI in Canada. The section's Transportation and Border Accords officer serves as a member of the U.S.-Canadian Shared Border Accord Coordinating Committee and the Transportation Border Working Group. Through these activities, the section seeks to assist DHS and its Canadian counterparts in developing and implementing border policies that enhance border security and facilitate cross-border economic activities.

The Foreign Commercial Service (FCS) is represented at the embassy and at most of the constituent posts. The economic/ESTH section discusses pending issues with FCS in the weekly economic and political section meeting. The economic section and the FCS office enjoy a close working relationship. Both sections flagged for the OIG team their cooperation on issues such as IPR protection. While the

FCS presence in Canada has declined in recent years (ceasing operations entirely at Consulate General Halifax), these draw downs have not yet substantially impacted workload for Department elements at those posts, with the exception of a Foreign Service officer providing informal oversight of two FCS LE staff at Consulate General Calgary.

Most major U.S. firms are represented in Canada, and many have Canadian operations. The Ambassador and other Mission Canada staff, including economic/ESTH section members, meet with U.S. firms frequently. During the inspection, the OIG team attended meetings in several different cities where the Ambassador addressed private sector business groups. The Ambassador has earned the respect and admiration of the business community and is an effective advocate for U.S. business.

## Environment, Science and Technology, and Health

The two officers in the ESTH division work to resolve trans-boundary environmental issues, an area of great importance and sensitivity in the bilateral relationship. These officers seek to obtain Canadian support for U.S. global initiatives on such issues as climate change, biosafety, and chemicals, as well as promote bilateral cooperation on shared global environmental objectives.

In addition to ESTH-related issues, the ESTH counselor is responsible for energy issues, traditionally an economic portfolio. The second ESTH officer's portfolio, however, is limited to ESTH issues alone; providing this officer with some economic areas of responsibility would enhance overall economic/ESTH section integration. The OIG team suggested that economic/ESTH section leadership reexamine portfolio distribution, with a view toward providing this officer the opportunity to engage in some degree of economic work. An informal recommendation was made.

Responsibility for issues related to avian influenza policy falls to the ESTH counselor. Recent ESTH efforts have sought to promote enhanced cooperation with Canada to develop a North American response plan for avian influenza under the auspices of the U.S., Canadian, and Mexican Security and Prosperity Partnership. The ESTH role in avian influenza policy has evolved, moving from a more activist effort aimed at facilitating communication on the issue, to a monitoring function aimed at advising relevant Department offices of developments and trends in Canadian avian influenza policy.

## POLITICAL AFFAIRS

The political section in Embassy Ottawa is effective in promoting U.S. policy interests in Canada. Its analysis and reporting on developments in Canada is concise and, according to Washington readers, relevant to policy development in Washington. U.S. policy positions are efficiently presented to the Canadian public and private sectors. The section is well managed by its minister counselor. The quality and volume of reporting from the consulates general varies, with some well below expectations. Work is underway on means for improved communications between embassy and consulate general reporting officers to integrate them more effectively into the mission vision.

### Analysis and Reporting

Analysis and reporting by the political section of Embassy Ottawa is very good. The section developed a reporting plan for the fiscal year closely linked to the MSP objectives and political developments in Canada. The section is current with its planned reporting. Since his arrival at post (five months before the inspection) the minister counselor has emphasized front channel cable reporting and decreased reliance on less formal means, such as e-mails. Spot reporting is frequent and often follows an e-mail heads-up on the issue to its Washington audience. Washington readers generally praised the section's reporting and commented favorably on the increase in cable reports.

The economic and political sections edit a daily activities report that contains one-paragraph items on key developments affecting U.S.-Canadian relations and key internal Canadian issues that impact on U.S. interests. Consulates general can also contribute to this report. This daily report is sent as a classified e-mail to over 80 addressees in Washington and the consulates general. During the inspection, the editors conducted a review of the report's audience and contents to ensure that the report is meeting its end user's needs. The OIG team agrees with the editors that this review is necessary and that the daily report should not be a substitute for cable reports.

There is no labor reporting planned by the political section, and little labor reporting has been done in the recent past as labor issues have not played an important role in domestic politics in recent years. During the survey period, multiple Washington agencies expressed a desire for additional labor reporting from Mission Canada, particularly related to the North American Agreement on Labor Cooperation, signed in 1993 as one of the supplementary accords to the North America Free Trade

Agreement; there was also interest in Washington on the state of the labor movement in Canada. The OIG team suggested that the political section, in coordination with the economic section, review labor developments and increase labor reporting. An informal recommendation was made.

## Advocacy and Operations

Canada is a major participant in efforts to bring security, peace, and development to Afghanistan with over 2,500 troops in country. The political military officer maintains excellent relations with Canadian officials who address the issue. Embassy Ottawa has supported the efforts of the current minority Government of Prime Minister Harper to extend the mandate of the Canadian forces in Afghanistan. During the inspection, the Canadian Parliament approved an extension of the mandate until 2011. The political military officer works closely with the Defense attaché to ensure that the U.S. message is delivered consistently and to the appropriate audiences.

Similarly, the section's deputy chief has developed a strong relationship with his Canadian counterparts on law enforcement policy, counterterrorism, and border security issues. He also has a major role, along with the RSO, in managing and influencing the Law Enforcement and Border Working Group (LEBWOG).

The political minister counselor has moved in recent months to develop a reporting plan for the section. He shared the plan with the consulates general seeking their input where the topics lent themselves to differing regional points of view. The minister counselor has encouraged the constituent posts to have mid- and short-term reporting plans and to stick to them.

The four-officer section covers the issues in its portfolio very well. The portfolio is equitably shared among the officers. The section has one LE staff member who has a broad network of contacts within the Canadian Government which she uses to great effect in collecting information. This LE staff political analyst is an important member of the section and contributes to reporting; most recently with an election primer just in time for the expected Canadian federal election.

There is good coordination within the section. The minister counselor holds a short optional section meeting each morning to review press and other developments as well as a weekly staff meeting at which ongoing and future work is discussed. The minister counselor participates in a large number of embassy coordination meetings. A weekly meeting with political, economic, and public diplomacy section heads and the DCM is very effective in coordinating activities between these three sections.

Electronic record keeping of outgoing and incoming action cables in the section is very good. However, background information and subject files are maintained by the reporting officers on their individually assigned computer hard drives. When an officer departs post these files are generally deleted resulting in the loss of information and continuity. The successor-officer often has to rebuild the lost expertise. The OIG team suggested that the section develop a method for officers to maintain their subject files in electronic files that can be accessed by others. An informal recommendation was made.

## CONSTITUENT POST REPORTING

The constituent posts play a major role in achieving Mission Canada's economic and political goals and work closely with both sections in the embassy in reporting on key issues affecting the bilateral relationship. The economic minister counselor in Ottawa serves as the reviewing officer for reporting officers in both Toronto and Calgary and the political minister counselor for a reporting officer in Vancouver. The embassy's economic and political section leadership has generally not micro-managed constituent post reporting, instead giving constituent posts a relatively free hand.

Communication between the embassy and the consulate general reporting officers is sporadic and issue or event driven. Consulate general reporting officers are often unsure of short-term embassy priorities, and thus may not contribute to what could be more complete reporting. Distances are great, and travel budgets are limited, so the OIG team suggested a regular (probably monthly) DVC of embassy political and economic officers with consulate general reporting officers and LE staff. Such a DVC would serve to better coordinate and integrate reporting as well as build a "Mission Canada" esprit de corps. It can also be used as a means to encourage increased and improved reporting. The political minister counselor, on behalf of both the economic and political sections, through an exchange of e-mails, has consulted the consulates general and prior to the departure of the OIG team, agreement was reached on format, frequency, and participation in such a DVC, and the first DVC was scheduled. An informal recommendation was made.

Consulate General Toronto's reporting is to be commended. Front channel reporting from Toronto is prodigious and of the highest quality. With only one mid-level officer, one rotational ELO, and one LE staff employee, Toronto, in recent months, provided Washington policymakers with more than 100 front channel reports on subjects including ethnic communities of interest, fisheries, finance, indus-

trial sector reports, crime and narcotics, border issues, and IPR. The section chief succeeded in making Canadian university student interns important contributors to the reporting effort. Toronto's report on the Iranian diaspora received kudos from Washington.

In Toronto, consular and ELOs have been employed heretofore to a very limited extent in support of post reporting. Toronto consular officers, who interact with more than 170 nationalities per year, could bring unique value added to post reporting, for example, in areas such as ethnic communities of interest. Given Toronto's position as the Canadian financial and commercial center, and that the greater Toronto area includes roughly one-sixth of Canada's population (more than half of which is foreign born), and its position as the destination for nearly half of all immigrants to Canada, reporting from Toronto can and will remain a high priority. Toronto should seek to make better use of consular officers and ELOs in support of post reporting, providing both guidance on gathering relevant information and drafting tips. An informal recommendation was made.

Moreover, the OIG team suggested Toronto work with Ottawa to determine whether additional personnel resources, such as another LE staff member, could be devoted to the Toronto substantive reporting effort. An informal recommendation was made.

One area of interest and importance to Washington policymakers where Toronto reporting could be strengthened is trafficking in persons. The substantial sex industry in Toronto, combined with a large foreign-born immigrant population, fosters an environment conducive to human trafficking. During discussions with the OIG team, Toronto ICE representatives agreed to support consulate general efforts to improve reporting on trafficking in persons; the OIG team encouraged Toronto reporting officers to coordinate with ICE in this area. An informal recommendation was made.

In Calgary, the consulate general has focused its limited reporting resources on energy issues. Reporting on other subjects has been fairly limited. Since the augmentation of Calgary's staff by one new reporting officer, Calgary reporting has increased across a broad spectrum of topics, and expects that this trend will continue.

Political and economic reporting from Canada's second city, Montreal, fell off dramatically in the months prior to the arrival of the OIG team. This was due primarily to a long gap between the departure of one reporting officer and the arrival of a successor. Secondly, there was no LE staff political/economic specialist/analyst to help fill the void. The recently arrived reporting officer has developed a reporting plan and has consulted with the political and economic sections in Ottawa.

Washington agencies praised reporting from Montreal and Consulate General Quebec City on francophone political and cultural issues and on Quebec City insights into softwood lumber issues.

Reporting from Consulate General Vancouver has been sporadic; however advocacy through calls on local government officials, speaking engagements, and representation events is excellent. The two reporting officers in Vancouver have a reporting plan which they need to implement more consistently. In the summer of 2008 one reporting position will be transferred to Embassy Ottawa. This will be at a time when activity in Vancouver will pick up in preparation for the 2010 Winter Olympic Games.

As noted in an earlier portion of this report, the worldwide shortage of Foreign Service officers is impacting the ability of the U.S. consulates general in Canada to meet their reporting and other responsibilities. This shortage is manifested by vacant positions and long gaps between departing and arriving officers. Fortunately, qualified and competent individuals are available in Canada to support the reporting and advocacy functions. LE staff can become a repository of knowledge and experience that can be invaluable in bringing newly arrived officers up to speed or filling gaps between officers. Currently, Consulate General Vancouver does not have political/economic LE staff position and Consulate General Montreal's position is vacant. As resources become available, Embassy Ottawa should authorize the hiring of LE staff for Consulates General Montreal and Vancouver to serve as economic/political specialists/analysts. An informal recommendation was made.

## LAW ENFORCEMENT COORDINATION

Law enforcement cooperation with the government of Canada is one of Mission Canada's top priorities. Law enforcement policy coordination with Canada is extensive, ranging from the annual high-level Cross Border Crime Forum (with the U.S. delegation in 2008 led by the Attorney General) to near daily communication involving several sections of the embassy including the new DHS attaché.

Within Embassy Ottawa, the primary means of monitoring implementation of this objective is through the weekly LEBWOG that is effective in coordinating the embassy's law enforcement community. The LEBWOG meets weekly after the country team meeting and is chaired by the Ambassador with the RSO as executive secretary. Ten U.S. federal law enforcement agencies have representatives assigned to Embassy Ottawa<sup>2</sup> who are members of the LEBWOG. Other government agencies and representatives from the political, economic, and public diplomacy sections and the DCM are also members of the group. Following the LEBWOG meeting, the DCM chairs the weekly counterterrorism meeting.

The newest member of the LEBWOG is the DHS attaché who arrived in February 2008. The attaché represents the Office of the Secretary of DHS and is charged with advising the Ambassador on DHS goals and objectives. The attaché does not have any line responsibilities toward the other DHS agencies present in Canada.

U.S. federal law enforcement agency representatives in Canada have established good working relationships with their Canadian counterparts at the federal and local level to share information and coordinate activities. Canadian and U.S. agencies also cooperate through the 15 regional Integrated Border Enforcement Teams along the border. These teams focus on sharing intelligence and enforcement resources along the border in order to address terrorism and identify, interdict, and apprehend persons who pose a threat to national security or who engage in cross-border criminal activity. Law enforcement coordination at the state/province and town-to-town level across the long undefended border is also extensive.

Consulates General Toronto and Vancouver have established regional law enforcement hubs where the agents from various U.S. law enforcement agencies are collocated. These hubs have led to improved communications between these agencies and improved relations with Canadian law enforcement in those regions.

Consulates General Vancouver and Montreal have established Law Enforcement Working Groups (LEWG) chaired by the consul general with the RSO as executive secretary to coordinate law enforcement activity in their districts. However, these

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<sup>2</sup>The 10 U.S. federal law enforcement agencies with representatives assigned to Embassy Ottawa are: Department of Justice's Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF); the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) as well as DHS' Immigration and Customs Enforcement (DHS-ICE), Customs and Border Protection (DHS-CBP), United States Secret Service (DHS-USSS), Transportation Safety Administration (DHS-TSA) and the United States Coast Guard Attaché (DHS-USCG); and Department of Treasury's Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigations Division (IRS-CID).

LEWG meet infrequently, and attendance is irregular when they do meet. Toronto does not have a formal LEWG. In the case of Consulate General Vancouver frequent and regular meetings are important in the lead-up to the Winter Olympic Games which Vancouver will host in February 2010. These fora could also be used to address counterterrorism issues as appropriate.

CBP preclearance staffs at their nine sites across Canada usually do not attend LEBWOG or LEWG meetings citing their location at airports distant from the embassy and consulates general and their schedules.

**Recommendation 4:** Embassy Ottawa should direct Consulates General Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal to reinvigorate or create their Law Enforcement Working Groups, meet on a regular schedule, and report the results of their meetings to Embassy Ottawa. (Action: Embassy Ottawa)

U.S. law enforcement agencies in Ottawa appear to have good channels of communication with their own agency colleagues assigned to the consulates general. However, there is no mechanism for ensuring that all relevant officers at the embassy or the constituent posts are kept fully apprised of LEBWOG and LEWG discussions and issues. No records of proceedings or decisions taken at LEBWOG meetings are provided to the consulates general, nor are summaries of the LEWGs provided to the embassy.

**Recommendation 5:** Embassy Ottawa should maintain a summary of proceedings of its Law Enforcement and Border Working Group meetings and should provide monthly summary reports in a front channel cable to the Department's Canada desk and other appropriate addressees with information copies to the consulates general. (Action: Embassy Ottawa)

U.S.-Canadian law enforcement and border issues have a high degree of complexity, and cut across many different U.S. Government agencies and departments. At the time of the inspection, embassy personnel advised the OIG team that there was no Washington equivalent of the LEBWOG; that is, a structured forum where relevant actors come together on a regular basis to discuss issues of mutual interest and concern related to the U.S.-Canadian border and law enforcement. The OIG team understands that planning is underway in the Department's Office of Canadian Affairs to establish such a forum.

**Recommendation 6:** The Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs should establish a Washington-based interagency U.S.-Canadian law enforcement and border working group to bring together representatives of all U.S. Government stakeholders to coordinate U.S.-Canadian law enforcement and border issues. (Action: WHA)

## PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

### Overview

The public affairs section effectively conveys the U.S. message through a wide variety of core public diplomacy activities namely: exchanges, public speaking, media outreach, interviews, and newspaper opinion pieces. A proactive and engaged Chief of Mission is a public diplomacy asset conducting frequent outreach efforts that include making speeches, giving interviews, having media availabilities, etc. The section runs a world class information resource center, recognized for expertise in developing technologies, which manages nine web sites. The center provides timely, authoritative, and complete information on MSP themes to key institutions and audiences. The public diplomacy program is executed successfully country-wide with support from Embassy Ottawa.

Public affairs staff members are skilled in identifying host country targets of opportunity and collaborating with them to increase outreach, often without any cost to the U.S. Government. These efforts contribute to improving a positive public profile. Due to the relationship between the United States and Canada there are a lot of cross border visits, performances, etc. Yet, without knowledgeable and experienced staff having relevant contacts, these opportunities would go unrecognized. In particular, Consulate General Toronto has achieved notable success programming numerous targets of opportunity that stretched program dollars.

In order to maximize the use of its tight finances, public affairs has made extensive and successful use of DVCs for management and program purposes. During FY 2007, the purchase of new equipment has facilitated their use even more. DVCs have allowed the section to hold staff meetings with officers at constituent posts at a time when lack of funds limited officers' travel. They are also used to hold a monthly country team meeting for the entire mission. Bureau of International Information Programs funded speakers regularly conduct DVCs to enable all posts in Canada to participate in their programs.

Senior mission officers are regularly involved in activities that support public outreach. They speak to audiences on topics in their area of expertise to clarify and explain relevant U.S. policies. The officers' willingness to speak and their efforts are commendable. However, one area for improvement is to increase mid-level and ELO involvement beyond the public affairs section mission-wide. Both the individuals and the mission would benefit from drawing these officers into outreach efforts, especially those that allow them to develop public speaking skills. The experience would also enable the officers to expand their contacts. An informal recommendation addresses this issue.

The public affairs section has endured budgetary limitations that adversely impact all aspects of its operations. For example, the lack of adequate training funds contributed to the section's failure to implement a contacts management system (described in a section below). To give the reader a sense of the size of Mission Canada's grant funds for FY 2007, it is noted that Jamaica was allocated twice the amount of Canada. Understanding that country needs are individual and cannot be reduced to percentages, these numbers show how relatively small Mission Canada's grants budget was. The public affairs officer (PAO) explained that the mission was forced to forgo prime MSP program opportunities. Upon the PAO's arrival, the section had to eliminate awards, training, and equipment repair and maintenance to balance the budget. Moreover, travel funds are about one half of what they were several years ago preventing officers from visiting constituent posts and having conferences.

The section is striving to recover from a period of extraordinary turnover among its American officers, which has adversely affected the unity and team spirit of the LE staff. In addition, two position descriptions are inaccurate, and key LE staff members require backups to cover their absences. These observations are discussed in detail in the following paragraphs of this report.

## Funding

Public affairs budget totals for the last three fiscal years were \$1.412 million for 2005; \$1.465 million for 2006; and \$1.367 for 2007, with an additional \$58,000 for a 2007 employee severance package. During these years fixed costs steadily increased, a fact which adversely impacted programming, training, and awards. In addition, the recent weakness of the U.S. dollar in relation to the Canadian dollar has resulted in mounting exchange rate losses that exacerbated public affairs financial problems. The PAO has worked with WHA's Office of Public Diplomacy Affairs to address the deteriorating situation by seeking an increase in the base for Mission Canada's public

diplomacy budget. As a consequence, the final FY 2008 public diplomacy target for Embassy Ottawa is \$1,557,600, but this awaits final Department approval and is subject to change.

The PAO at Embassy Ottawa controls the annual budget for all public diplomacy efforts throughout Canada. Several constituent posts find that this control makes their program planning difficult. Some suggested a formal public diplomacy budget allocation for each constituent post. In discussions with embassy management officers, the OIG team was told that formal allocations would pose problems for the embassy's financial management center and its public affairs section. If implemented, the work of the financial management center would greatly expand. Moreover, the public diplomacy budget is the responsibility of the country public affairs officer. With the very limited budgetary resources available, the officer must ensure that funds are put to their best use.

The PAO can provide each constituent post with an informal allocation for miscellaneous, nongrant local program activities, thus allowing the constituent post to do timely planning and make its own decisions on local activities within the target amount and the MSP. Yet, a system should be in place for approval from Embassy Ottawa to commit funds before final action on their use is taken. An informal recommendation covers this matter.

## Staffing

During the last three years, a revolving door of public diplomacy Foreign Service officers passed through Embassy Ottawa with the current PAO and information officer arriving in October 2007 and November 2007 respectively. Three PAOs, three information officers, and two cultural affairs officers have all served for varying amounts of time during the last three years. Officers' learning curves plus operational interruptions that accompanied these turnovers have resulted in less than optimum performance and stressed LE staff. There are eight LE staff positions, all filled. A sense of team spirit is missing among them, and overall, they focus upon individual assignments.

Consulates General Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver each have a direct-hire American public diplomacy officer. Each of them also has two local-hire positions with a vacancy existing in both Montreal and Vancouver. In addition, Consulate General Calgary has an American citizen LE staff member on board and another LE staff vacancy while Consulate General Halifax has two LE staff positions. Consulates general are recruiting to fill the vacancies and expect to fill them in the near future.

At Embassy Ottawa, two LE staff position descriptions fail to reflect the actual duties performed by the employees. The PAO is aware of this and considering how best to resolve the issue, especially in light of the absence of any LE staff member doing comprehensive database analysis. In addition, some employees have inadequate, or no, backup to cover their absences. Two are overwhelmed with work, although others could do more. Public affairs section officers, as a first step, need to review LE staffing and take action to correct current inadequacies. Specifically, they should review and revise position descriptions to include current responsibilities as well as backup duties to ensure every position is covered adequately during absences. An informal recommendation covers this matter.

## Contacts Management System

Public affairs sections at both Embassy Ottawa and its constituent posts lack adequate contacts management databases. Staff members use a variety of means to track contacts ranging from a rolodex to Goldmine software. Some are using different databases for different purposes. Duplication of records exists, and worse, when an employee is out, others cannot always retrieve needed information. For the most part, the tools used merely generate lists of names for events and mailings. There is a need for one unified contacts management system that has the capability of analyzing appropriate audiences for outreach and tracking interaction with contacts. The lack of a unified, sophisticated contact management system reduces the amount and impact of public affairs programming, the provision of reports that analyze information, and the generation of reports to meet program needs. The contacts management system should also be available for mission-wide input and data management to avoid unnecessary duplication and to facilitate the flow of information.

Critical to the success of any contacts management database is training on its operation. Once the officers choose a database, training for all employees entering and retrieving information should be provided. For example, several employees said that Goldmine was available, but that they did not understand how to use it fully. Without adequate training, no database will be successful.

**Recommendation 7:** Embassy Ottawa should identify and implement a contacts management database for the public affairs section, with mission-wide availability that provides analytical reports as well as lists of names, and should train users in its operation. (Embassy Ottawa)

## Grants Management

The embassy public affairs section is the only Department element of Mission Canada that awards grants. The country PAO and the PAO at Consulate General Toronto both have grant warrants allowing them to sign and approve grants. As the PAO in Toronto is leaving during the summer of 2008, the cultural affairs officer in Ottawa is taking the grants course to obtain a warrant. Total grants awarded for FY 2007 totaled approximately \$29,000, and the embassy public affairs section maintains the grant files. A review of the grant files for FY 2007 found them complete; containing awards, program reports, and financial reports. The public affairs section works with Department grants officials to stay current on procedural and policy changes.

## International Visitors

For several years, including FY 2008, Mission Canada had 18 international visitor slots to award. Until the FY 2008 selections, the embassy and each constituent post nominated as many individuals as they wished, resulting in an average total of about 60 per year. The selection process involved two country-wide DVCs, with the DCM participating, during which all nominees were reviewed. The amount of time involved in the process was deemed to be excessive.

During FY 2007, the process for choosing FY 2008 international visitors was changed to put more responsibility on each constituent post to prescreen international visitor nominees and to make the selection process more transparent. Each post, including the embassy, was invited to submit from three to five nominees depending on its size. During round one of the process, the committee selected the first choice of each constituent post and the embassy plus one nominee from a virtual presence post (VPP) for a total of nine. An additional nine were chosen via DVC in which all posts participated. All nominee programs were tied to MSP goals. In selecting the additional nine, the selection committee focused on achieving a balance between various MSP goals, groups, regions, etc. This method provided transparency and saved time. It will continue for selection of FY 2009 international visitor nominees. The public affairs section has largely moved from individual to single-country group international visitor programs thus multiplying program benefits.

## Fulbright Foundation

The Foundation for Educational Exchange between Canada and the United States of America (Foundation) was established in 1990. It encourages scholarship on issues of importance to the two countries primarily through academic and cultural exchange. Led by an activist executive director, the foundation is a highly regarded player in Canadian academia. For the foundation's fiscal year ending August 31, 2007, revenue was approximately \$3.15 million with about \$850,000 from the government of Canada, \$800,000 from the U.S. government, and the remainder from donations and trusts. The approximately \$1.5 million received from nongovernmental sources demonstrates the success of the executive director's fundraising efforts.

The foundation sponsors several academic programs in addition to the Fulbright Program including the Killam Fellowships Program and the Network on North American Studies in Canada. Although these latter programs are not part of Fulbright, they are closely related academic initiatives. Public affairs officers are monitoring the foundation to ensure it remains focused on its core Fulbright Program and that overhead expenses related to noncore programs are not paid from U.S. Government funds.

In order to develop long-term partnerships between Canadian and American institutions, the foundation established the Visiting Research Chairs Program. As each chair is for a specific subject area, some do not attract candidates every year. Yet, once established, there is no cost involved in maintaining a vacant chair position. Some Washington-based officials criticize this program as too specialized and suggested its discontinuance. The effort and resources invested in the implementation of the program are sunk costs - they cannot be recovered. Eliminating the chairs would create ill will and gain nothing. Public affairs officers are monitoring the program and discouraging significant expenditures on development of additional chairs.

## VIRTUAL PRESENCE POSTS

The mission's three existing VPPs in Nunavut, the Northwest Territories, and the Yukon are underperforming. The situation is due to considerable misunderstanding within the mission regarding the VPP concept and how to carry it out. Some think of a VPP as merely a web site, while others are confused about whether the embassy or a constituent post is responsible for their development and maintenance. A VPP is a tool to provide virtual consulate services from a variety of relevant agencies and sections such as the consular section, the Foreign Commercial Service, and others.

While the public affairs section is a key element in a VPP, and responsible for outreach, a VPP is not a proprietary public diplomacy instrument. A VPP focuses on a specific target community, which can be a small country, a population group, a city or some similar community that the mission aims to reach.

Four structures are basic to running an effective VPP, namely 1) a virtual principal officer, 2) a virtual country team, 3) an LE staff member who acts as VPP assistant, and 4) a cosponsor in the target community. The most visible continuous component is a devoted web site. Operation of the VPP includes travel to target cities by representatives of various agencies and sections of the mission, conducting programs with the cooperation of the cosponsor, extensive media outreach, and remote follow-up using technologies such as cell phones, e-mail, DVCs, and online web chats.

The VPP model is relatively new and allows for considerable flexibility. Yet, the Embassy Ottawa VPPs diverge substantially from Department fact sheets and guidance. VPP Nunavut is the responsibility of Quebec City, VPP Northwest Territories of Calgary, and VPP Yukon of Vancouver. None of the VPPs has a cosponsor or specified physical space for visits and programs. Questionnaires completed by each responsible post and discussions with Embassy Ottawa staff indicated confusion as to who are the VPP principal officers. Most considered the cultural affairs officer in Ottawa the principal officer for all. Each responsible consulate general should assign its own principal officer and establish its own virtual country team and LE staff.

Embassy Ottawa maintains one web site with three sections, one for each VPP. As there is but a single server, one cannot determine which VPP was the target of a “hit.” Statistics for FY 2007 show 655,000 “hits,” 214,000 page views, and 56,176 user sessions. These numbers appear low for three VPPs, but they are understandable because the populations of the target areas are small. Reaching these VPP communities is an MSP goal.

The webmaster posts material given to him by the responsible consulates general and by staff in Ottawa. A review of the VPP web site for the three revealed no announcements of upcoming visits or programs and no reports of recently held events. The questionnaires completed by the three consulates general did report various personal contacts, programs, and visits. These activities should be reflected on the site. It is also critical to the effectiveness of each VPP to announce such visits and programs on the web site in advance to attract local interest and ensure an audience for them. Responsible posts must regularly provide the webmaster with reports of their VPP activities for posting.

**Recommendation 8:** Embassy Ottawa should establish cosponsors in the virtual presence post communities, announce visits and programs in advance on the virtual presence post web site, and submit reports to the webmaster afterwards for posting on the web site in order to more effectively reach target audiences. (Embassy Ottawa)

A comparison of programs and visits conducted in the VPPs' target communities revealed that Consulate General Quebec City supported few such events to VPP Nunavut. The review included an evaluation of information posted on the three VPP's web sites plus consulates general responses to an OIG questionnaire. Quebec City's situation is understandable as its staff and resources are limited. In order to make VPP Nunavut a more effective tool for serving the intended audience, the Inuit people, responsibility should be moved to a post with more staff and resources to devote to the VPP effort.

**Recommendation 9:** Embassy Ottawa should reassign responsibility for virtual presence post Nunavut from Consulate General Quebec City to a post better able to support visits and programs in the target community. (Embassy Ottawa)

## AMERICAN PRESENCE POST

There is one American presence post (APP) in Canada, located in Winnipeg. There had been a consulate in Winnipeg for over 100 years that was closed in 1986; the APP opened in late 2001. At the APP, one Foreign Service officer and two LE staff occupy commercial space in a centrally located commercial office building.

The purpose of this APP is primarily to establish and maintain relations with important government and private sectors in Manitoba Province – to be an official U.S. “presence” in the vast area of central Canada. Only emergency consular services to Americans in distress is provided by the APP, however, Consulate General Calgary consular officers visit for several days each quarter to provide consular services to U.S. citizens.

The OIG team did not visit the APP. Through discussions with Mission Canada officers and reports from the APP, every indication is that APP Winnipeg is successfully meeting its purpose and that the consul is effective in explaining and advancing U.S. policy in the region. The consul also provides e-mail reporting on developments in provincial politics and border issues including the contentious issue of Canadian concerns that waters in North Dakota diverted from Devil's Lake into the Red River basin (and eventually Lake Manitoba in Canada) could introduce foreign aquatic species of concern into Canadian waters.

The OIG team noted that Embassy Ottawa is not proceeding with earlier plans to open an APP in Windsor, Ontario, currently part of the Toronto consular district. Instead, it intends to open a VPP. Given Windsor's location immediately across the border from Detroit, its relative proximity to Toronto, and the limited funding available, the OIG team agrees that this APP should not be opened.

## CONSULAR AFFAIRS

### Overview

The Minister Counselor for Consular Affairs in Ottawa provides policy oversight and coordination to the seven consular sections in Canada. The sections vary in size from micro (Quebec, Halifax), to small (Calgary), to medium (Ottawa, Montreal), and large (Toronto, Vancouver). All sections have offsite fee collection, use mail courier pass-back, and have implemented 10-print collection for nonimmigrant visa processing (NIV).

### Vancouver

Vancouver's consular section has experienced a continuing rise in NIV applications as well as increasing numbers of revalidations of temporary worker visas for applicants coming from the United States. To manage this workload, applicants resident in Canada are given preference in scheduling of appointments over those residing in the United States. Vancouver does not process immigrant visas but does adjudicate fiancé (K) visas. While the K visa processing is more time consuming than other types of NIVs the unit processes several per day and is able to maintain short NIV appointment waiting times.

## Calgary

Though small at present, Consulate General Calgary plans to expand its capacity to provide consular services. Mission Canada has recommended post receive an additional ELO, in part because of Calgary's increased workload demand, commensurate with other posts, and Calgary has the interview window space needed to accommodate additional visa interviews. In the long run, the consulate general's location on the eighth floor of a downtown high-rise commercial building will limit any further increase in space for consular services. Calgary's consular district includes an unusually high number of American citizens, many of whom are employed in Alberta's booming energy sector. The well-run consular section is in the process of forming a visas viper committee, to include participation of the DHS CBP Port Director at the preclearance center at Calgary's international airport.

## Toronto

Consulate General Toronto has the largest NIV section in Canada. About half of all new immigrants to Canada chose the greater Toronto area for their place of residence. There has been a steady rise in demand for visa services in Toronto, which has led to long waiting lines for visa appointments. The American citizens services (ACS) section is productive, well-staffed, and has made extraordinary efforts to reach out to the sometimes difficult-to-document U. S. citizen Amish community. With a steadily increasing demand in services, consular management is challenged to maintain a positive work environment.

In 2006, an American officer in the Toronto consular section was arrested by U. S. law enforcement authorities for professional misconduct. Emotional scars from the incident remain, and several LE staff have been asked to provide depositions for his upcoming trial. Consular management has also reorganized LE staff responsibilities.

## Ottawa

The consular section in Embassy Ottawa is scheduled to receive a much-needed change in physical layout during summer 2008. The change will create a separate building entrance with its own public access control facility for visa applicants. At present, visa applicants and clients for ACS enter through the embassy's main entrance. Ottawa needs this separate visa entrance to accommodate the rising number of visa applicants coming to Ottawa due in large part to long waiting times for appointments in Toronto.

## Montreal

Montreal is the only immigrant visa (IV) processing post in Canada. Most of the IV unit's cases involve petitions filed in the United States and preprocessed at the National Visa Center (NVC). The IV unit also processes all immediate relative (IR) cases filed at posts in Canada. These cases put an additional workload burden on the unit as these cases have not undergone NVC preprocessing. The Bureau of Consular Affairs' Visa Office is working with post to assist the IV unit to address the increased workload. One possible solution is that in-country IR petitions be sent to NVC for preprocessing.

## Quebec City

The OIG team was unable to visit the consular section in Quebec City but did interview the one consular officer by telephone. Current consular workspace is not adequate, and the section is scheduled for a renovation project in FY 2009. The small waiting room with limited seating creates NIV workflow bottlenecks and, at times, results in visa applicants having to wait outside the building. During the renovation NIV applicants will be directed to Consulate General Montreal, and ACS will be provided from an off-site location.

## Halifax

The OIG team was unable to visit Halifax but did conduct a telephone interview of the consular officer. Halifax is a small post, open two days each week for visa services and two days each week for nonemergency American citizens services. The consular chief stated that current staffing and workspace is adequate to meet the demand for consular services. Requests for passport services leveled off at the beginning of 2008, while applications for the consular report of birth abroad (CRBA) have increased. Approximately 40 percent of visa requests are made by U.S.-based NIV renewal applicants, most likely in Halifax because it has a shorter waiting time than the larger consular sections in Canada.

## Nonimmigrant Visas

Despite the complexity of issues and the demand for services, NIV sections in Canada do a good job of facilitating travel to the United States while denying visas to applicants who either do not meet eligibility requirements or who may be viewed as a possible security threat. Consular sections in Canada processed over 160,000 visa applications in 2007, and the overwhelming majority of them are third-country

national applicants who have immigrated to Canada. Canada accepts 300,000 new immigrants each year, many of whom soon find their way to a U.S. consulate general to apply for visas to visit the United States. In 2007, Toronto alone processed visa applications from third-country nationals from more than 180 countries.

In March 2003, U. S. regulations governing entry into the United States changed to require Canadian permanent residents from Commonwealth countries to apply for visas. Prior to this time such landed immigrants could enter the United States by showing proof of their landed immigrant status in Canada. In 2004, the visa office closed its visa processing center in Washington, DC. The DC location had served as a revalidation center for petition-based NIVs for persons already in the United States. Now, applicants who want to revalidate their visas have a choice: return to their home countries to apply, or cross the border into Canada or Mexico. Many choose Canada, and visa revalidations combined with applications from Canada's immigrant population have created a near "limitless demand" for visa services at consular sections in Canada.

Individual visa interviews and visa processing in Canada is often more complex than in most posts abroad. Many applicants have limited English, and waiting rooms in consular sections in Canada are a cacophony of languages. Due to specific regulatory requirements, many applicants require security advisory opinions. Tracking security advisory opinions and updating clearances create an additional administrative workload.

Still, challenges remain. Facilities at Canada's two largest NIV centers (Toronto and Vancouver) are woefully inadequate. Managing an appointment system when there are far more applicants than available appointments is a work in progress. Consular sections need more information from both CBP and the Canadian Border Services Agency to ensure that visas are issued based on accurate, timely data. Recommendations were made in the NIV section of this report.

## Facilities

The awkward, convoluted physical layout of the NIV unit in Toronto simply no longer measures up to consular workload demand. The unit is essentially divided in half. The section dubbed "NIV South" does the vast majority of NIV processing, while a second section ("NIV North") stands mostly idle, separated from potential visa applicants by the consulate's main entrance and foyer.



Two previous inspections recommended that Toronto's facility be improved – and that was before the major increase in demand in 2003-2004. For many years the Department has acknowledged the need for a new facility in Toronto and the Bureau of Overseas Building Operations (OBO) has Toronto on its list of new office buildings for FY 2014. That date continues to slip (it was 2011 only months ago). In light of the fact that the consulate general will remain in the present building for at least the next six years, if not longer, improvements in the consular section must be addressed now. As changes in the physical layout progress, consular management should balance the workload and capacity between NIV South and NIV North. Working with the formal recommendation provided in the annex to this inspection report, the consular section should make greater use of the interviewing windows and office space located in NIV North, including but not limited to: intake, biometrics, and data entry of U.S.-based petition visa cases (E, H, L, O and P visas). The NIV unit chief should ensure a more balanced workload among LE staff. An informal recommendation was made.

The Vancouver consular section is in a high-rise commercial building. The main obstacle to more productive NIV processing is in the consulate general's physical layout. The NIV area is divided between a mezzanine intake/waiting area and the cramped 20th floor interview area. Applicants must be checked through security twice because the elevator is not under the consulate general's control and stops on intervening floors between the mezzanine and the 20th floor. There is adequate room on the mezzanine floor for interviews, but secure physical reconfiguration must be made. The elevator transit and second security check results in uneven workflow as officers must wait for applicants to reach the interview area.

**Recommendation 10:** The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, in coordination with Embassy Ottawa and the Bureaus of Western Hemisphere Affairs and Consular Affairs, should develop and fund a plan to redesign the mezzanine waiting area of Consulate General Vancouver to include the installation of visa interview windows. (Action: OBO, in coordination with Embassy Ottawa, WHA, and CA)

## Managing Nonimmigrant Visa Workload

Scarcity begets demand. Because so many people want to apply for visas in U.S. consular sections in Canada, waiting times for some categories of appointments tend to be long: six weeks or more. To make the appointment system as flexible

and responsive as possible, the Minister Counselor for Consular Affairs in Ottawa developed a “cascade” appointment system that features shorter waiting times for students and local residents and longer waits for U.S.-based applicants. The NIV appointment system is dynamic and complex. With the Minister Counselor due to leave post this summer, it is important that he develop a written key explaining exactly how the system works. An informal recommendation was made.

The demand for appointments, especially for U.S.-based applicants has created a cottage industry for immigration attorneys, some of whom attempt to cheat the system by reserving blocks of appointments using fictitious identities for would-be clients. Others try to gain influence with consular managers and obtain highly-prized “expedited appointments” – that is, they bypass the phone center that handles most appointments and appeal to the consular managers directly. Alleged abuse of this practice led to the arrest of a consular manager in Toronto in August, 2006. Also, the high level of access enjoyed by immigration attorneys at one post led to the practice of preadjudicating visa cases. Attorneys were allowed to bring visa cases to a consular manager in advance and discuss whether or not their applicants would likely be approved. This practice no longer takes place.

Some posts have acted to make the expedited appointment system more equitable and transparent. Others limit access for immigration attorneys to written communication, including faxes and e-mails.

**Recommendation 11:** Embassy Ottawa should develop and implement a mission-wide standard operating procedure to facilitate requests for expedited visa appointments, including expedited business visa requests, in a transparent, equitable manner. This should include guidance that sets professional standards for contact between consular employees and immigration attorneys. (Action: Embassy Ottawa)

The referral system policy for posts in Canada does not fully conform to Department regulations. The policy should note that all referrals, including Class B referrals, should “promote U.S. national interests or public diplomacy efforts.”

**Recommendation 12:** Embassy Ottawa should bring the mission-wide visa referral policy into conformance with Department of State regulations. (Action: Embassy Ottawa)

The inspection revealed that some referrals have been made without a proper paper trail. Instead of using the correct form, the referrer uses an e-mail and asks that it be considered a referral. Consular managers should provide formal training sessions to mission personnel, explaining visa referral regulations. Personnel must attend a training session to be eligible to make a referral. An informal recommendation was made.

Many consular sections in Canada have struggled to implement the Department's Petition Information Management System (PIMS). Because the approved I-797 petition form is not considered a secure document, the Department implemented new regulations in 2007 requiring the Kentucky Consular Center (KCC) to assign all petition-based visa applications an independent, verifiable PIMS number. The PIMS number proves that the petition has been approved.

However, the PIMS identification number is not entered into the data system in a timely manner for many of the visa applicants who come to Canada from the United States. Applicants are forced to remain in Canada an additional two to three working days waiting for the information to be entered into the data system. Posts have developed work-intensive advance notification systems which request that KCC assign PIMS numbers to visa applicants with appointments. Unfortunately, success remains elusive. In Toronto, one-fourth of U.S.-based petition visa applicants are not in PIMS at the time of their interviews. In Calgary, the percentage is higher, nearly 50 percent. Both CA and KCC are aware of the problem, but evidence suggests they may lack resources to solve it.

**Recommendation 13:** Embassy Ottawa should adjust the mission-wide visa appointment system so that U.S.-based petition visa applicants cannot receive an appointment until the Petition Information Management System verification number has been assigned. (Action: Embassy Ottawa)

In January 2007, Toronto revamped NIV processing procedures and began using a team-oriented approach that provides some LE staff the opportunity to vary job responsibilities from week to week. The team concept is also intended to provide ELOs with the opportunity to gain managerial experience. Recent changes in lines of responsibility may eliminate that opportunity. The consular section chief in Toronto should reinstitute the practice of having ELOs rate the LE staff team leaders on performance evaluations. The ELOs should also review performance evaluations of all other team members. An informal recommendation was made.

The OIG team worked with Toronto consular management and Ottawa human resources (HR) staff to resolve longstanding issues involving position descriptions, computer aided job evaluations (CAJE) and job vacancies. These issues are discussed further in the report's HR section.

## Training and Information Sharing

As noted previously, U.S. visa adjudicating officers in Canada face a complex set of challenges. The so-called "line officers" – often first- or second-tour ELOs – impressed the OIG team with their capacity and desire to make quality decisions. ELOs take seriously their responsibility to facilitate travel and protect border security. Still, it is equally clear that more must be done to provide them with the training and information necessary to accomplish these tasks.

As pressure mounts to meet increases in demand for NIV services, the time available for orientation and training for ELOs often diminishes. It remains important that line officers have enough time to participate in activities that give a broader perspective of U.S. policies and world trends. Visa decisions can improve when adjudicating officers know the context in which they occur. The ability to take time to read cable traffic, participate in brown bag lunches featuring current topics of interest, to serve as note-takers, and to attend representational events are part of the basic training and orientation that make better-informed Foreign Service officers. Mission Canada has taken important steps to provide orientation for ELOs. For example, all ELOs at constituent posts must visit Embassy Ottawa for orientation. Some ELOs travel to Canadian consulates along the U.S. border to gain insight into their procedures. However, more can be done.

**Recommendation 14:** Embassy Ottawa should develop a formal mission-wide, written consular orientation program for entry-level officers on consular tours. (Action: Embassy Ottawa)

It is important that middle and senior consular managers help consular ELOs and senior consular LE staff develop and maintain key contacts in Canadian government agencies. Consular section chiefs and/or visa unit and ACS chiefs should use their good office to introduce ELOs and LE staff, including the fraud investigators, to points of contact within Canadian government agencies. An informal recommendation was made.

ELOs often make visa adjudication decisions based at least in part on an applicant's immigration status in Canada. Most ELOs expressed concern that they do not have a firm understanding of Canadian immigration regulations.

**Recommendation 15:** Embassy Ottawa should ask Citizenship and Immigration Canada to provide presentations on Canadian immigration regulations to the consular adjudicating officers, including explanations of the various ways a third-country national may obtain landed immigrant status in Canada. (Action: Embassy Ottawa)

An important additional source of information for adjudicating line officers is CBP. At present, consular officers who have access to CBP personnel can ask them to search the DHS database for information on visa applicants of interest. This system works in large part due to cordial relations between Department and DHS employees.

The presence of CBP preclearance facilities at international airports in Canada, along with the close proximity between Canadian posts and the CBP presence at border crossings, offers additional opportunities for information sharing. According to CBP officials, each CBP Port Director (at border crossings and preclearance facilities) submits a daily "Situation Room Report" to DHS Headquarters in Washington, DC. These unclassified reports are a daily accounting of what takes place at CBP facilities and may include background information and/or information on specific incidents that would help adjudicating officers deepen their understanding of what takes place along the border and at airport ports of entry into the United States.

**Recommendation 16:** Embassy Ottawa, in coordination with the Bureaus of Consular Affairs and Western Hemisphere Affairs, should request that the daily "Situation Room Reports," written by port directors at preclearance facilities and at border crossings within or adjacent to a consular district, be made available to that district's consular section chief. (Action: Embassy Ottawa, in coordination with CA and WHA)

## American Citizens Services

Ottawa's ACS unit provides advice and guidance to consulates general in Canada. While there are over 90,000 Americans registered with the embassy's consular section, there are still large numbers of American citizens in the Ottawa's consular district temporarily, such as tourists, students, and business persons, who are not registered. The ACS unit experienced a sharp increase in passport applications when the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI) was announced. Many dual nationals who had been crossing the U.S./Canada border for years began applying for U.S. passports. In addition, the backlog of passport applications in the summer of 2007 resulted in the unit receiving many applications from American citizens residing on the U.S. side of the border. The demand for passports has recently gone down as many American citizens are now applying for the new U.S. passport card.

Often Americans are stopped by Canadian authorities at the border for immigration or/criminal violations. Some are immediately sent back to the United States. Others are detained for hours, overnight, several days, or longer. Consular sections in Canada have not been generating arrest cables to the Department for many of these detentions as posts have no clear guidance on how long an American can be held by foreign authorities before they are considered to be under arrest. In addition, the mission does not have standard operating procedures on arrest notifications.

**Recommendation 17:** Embassy Ottawa should seek clarification from the Bureau of Consular Affairs and the Office of the Legal Adviser as to when border detentions need to be reported as arrest cases. (Action: Embassy Ottawa)

Vancouver estimates that close to 90,000 Americans reside in their consular district. The demand for U. S. passports and CRBAs is increasing largely in response to the passport requirement mandated under the WHTI. To manage the increased workload the unit initiated the use of an appointment system for passport and CRBA applicants and handles most ACS inquiries via e-mail. The appointment system has shortened the waiting time for American citizens and allows the unit to better organize its workload.

Montreal's ACS unit provides services to American citizens residing and visiting the city and part of Quebec province. The WHTI has resulted in increasing CRBA and passport workload for the unit. Many people in Montreal's consular district have dual U.S./Canadian citizenship. When the WHTI is fully implemented in 2009, dual citizens will be required to present a valid citizenship document to enter each of the

two countries. A major portion of the unit's citizenship work involves claims to derivative citizenship. These cases involved U.S. citizenship claims by adults who learn that they had a U.S. citizen parent or grandparent. Processing these complex cases is complicated and time consuming.

The ACS unit does not have a scheduling system for consular officer visits to American citizens incarcerated in Montreal's consular district. The Montreal ACS unit should determine the number and location of all American citizens incarcerated within its district and then should implement and maintain a tracking system. An informal recommendation was made.

Toronto's ACS unit added an ELO rotational position in 2007. This benefited a busy workplace that adjudicates hundreds of passports and CRBAs each month, many of them complicated cases involving first-time adult applicants. ACS Toronto has developed its own spreadsheet to track detentions and arrests of American citizens, but only a small percentage of those listed cases are officially reported to the Department. Because of a conflict between Canadian law and the international convention covering notary services, Toronto, and other posts in Canada provide an unusually high number of notarials.

As with other consular posts, Consulates General Calgary, Halifax, and Quebec City have had to manage an increasing ACS workload of adjudications for CRBAs and first-time passports generated by WHTI requirements. While their current staffing is adequate, further workload increases may require additional staff.

## Immigrant Visas

Montreal is the only IV processing post in Canada. Most of the unit's cases are IV petitions that have been filed in the United States and preprocessed at the NVC before being forwarded to Montreal for adjudication. However, IR petitions filed at posts in Canada are sent directly to Montreal for full processing. The approximately 700 IR/IVs received from posts do not benefit from the extensive preprocessing done by the NVC, thus increasing the workload of the Montreal IV unit.

**Recommendation 18:** The Bureau of Consular Affairs should direct that all Immediate Relative immigrant visa petitions approved by Department consular offices in Canada be sent to the National Visa center for preprocessing. (Action: CA)



intended to devote most of their time to consular fraud issues, and post management will need to ensure good communication between consular managers and the RSO to develop and maintain productive working relationships. They should also have the tools needed to conduct investigations. The visa unit chief, ACS chief, and ARSO-I should each have individual access to LEXIS-NEXIS. An informal recommendation was made.

Since May 2007, DHS has operated a visa security unit (VSU) in Montreal, currently staffed by two DHS ICE officers. Most of the VSU's work involves the screening of NIV cases – both issuances and refusals – using DHS lookout and database systems. On occasion the ACS unit may request that the VSU check a passport application or the IV unit may ask them to check one of its applications to determine if there is a security problem. DHS plans to add VSUs at other consular sections in Canada.

DHS and CA are still engaged in a series of ad hoc discussions regarding what types of cases and visa categories a VSU will review or investigate. During the Washington survey phase, the OIG team discussed the establishment of VSUs with the appropriate agencies in Washington and believes more attention needs to be given to delineating the areas of responsibilities between the ARSO-I, the VSU, and the fraud prevention unit. Without more regular and structured discussions, there is great potential for creating overlapping and redundant bureaucracies that could inhibit the quick, efficient review of sensitive security-related cases. In particular, the Department and DHS should agree quickly on the wording of the joint cable promised in paragraph six of 05 State 029325 that is meant to describe the respective roles of DS and DHS personnel regarding any future investigations.

**Recommendation 19:** The Bureau of Diplomatic Security, in coordination with the Bureau of Consular Affairs, should send the joint Department of State and Department of Homeland Security cable (05 State 029325) detailing the respective roles of the assistant regional security officer for investigations and visa security unit personnel in regards to visa-related investigations. (Action: DS, in coordination with CA)

While consular officers in Montreal's IV unit express concern about fraud involving sham marriages or fiancée relationships, post did not report any confirmed fraudulent cases in 2007. In addition, NIV adjudicating officers express fraud concerns about three categories of visa applicants: truck drivers, Chinese nationals (especially those from Fujin Province), and childcare providers who have worked for current employers for only a short time.





# RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

## U.S. Mission Ottawa - Funding Levels

(Source: Embassy Ottawa)

AGENCY	US DH	US LE Staff	FSN	FY 07 FUNDING	FY 08 FUNDING
STATE - D&CP PROGRAM (INCLUDES BUREAU-FUNDED MRV FUNDS)	110	10	97	9,283,525	9,782,800
STATE – D&CP REPRESENTATION FUNDS	n/a	n/a	n/a	74,000	68,200
PUBLIC DIPLOMACY	6	0	18	1,425,974	1,557,600
PA – REPRESENTATION FUNDS	n/a	n/a	n/a	17,700	16,300
ICASS Traditional	11	12	91	7,056,000	7,984,200
LGP				1,985,800	2,305,800
OBO				601,400	631,300
STATE – DS, MSG & WSU	7	2	1	3,085,254	2,348,179
STATE – MRV PROGRAM	n/a	n/a	n/a	1,020,882	1,010,442
STATE – ICAO International Civil Aviation Org	n/a	n/a	n/a	145,800	123,700*
OBO – OVERSEAS BUILDING OPERATIONS	n/a	n/a	n/a	7,534,964	5,338,470
DSCA - Defense Security Cooperation Agency	1	0	1	93,000	100,000
APHIS - Animal Plant Health Inspection Service	1	0	1	105,180	107,050
FOREIGN AGRICULTURE SERVICE	2	0	5	511,801	693,191
FOREIGN COMMERCIAL SERVICE	3	0	20	2,240,018	2,128,000*
JUS - Drug Enforcement Agency	14	0	0	172,183	180,000
JUS – LEGATT – Legal Attaché	10	0	0	535,300	554,900
JUS – ATF - Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms	4	1	0	129,050	168,300
US NAVY – PEP – Personnel Exchange Program	2	0	0	18,500	18,500
TREASURY – IRS - Internal Revenue Service	1	0	1	33,000	70,000
ARMY - PEP – Personnel Exchange Service	1	0	0		
ARMY – TRADOC –Training & Doctrine Command	0	0	0	12,000	15,000
ARMY – USAITC – US Army Intel Tech Ctr	1	0	1	168,000	211,000
USAF – ACC PMS - Air Combat Command Contract Program Squad	4	0	0	-	-
USNORTHCOM – Northern Command	2	0	0	88,000	70,000
USAF - Personnel Exchange Program	3	0	0	68,000	68,000
DHS – Transportation Security Administration	1	0	1	-	-
DHS – SECRET SERVICE	8	0	5	400,000	500,000
DHS – ICE INT’L AFFAIRS	17	0	4	1,669,412	2,163,480
DHS – PRECLEARANCE	482	0	15	53,100,000	56,600,000
DHS – CBP INT’L AFFAIRS	7	0	0	43,000	35,000
DHS – CBP, CSI	9	0	0	63,000	66,000
NASA – National Agency for Space Administration	0	0	1	15,750	16,200
DEF-DIA – Defense Intelligence Agency	7	0	2	326,175	360,000
DEF-DIA/LO – Defense Intelligence Agency Liaison	5	0	0	58,000	49,000
NGA - National Geospatial Intelligence Agency	3	0	0	15,000	15,000
DCMA AMERICAS Defense Contract Mgt Agency	33	0	0	4,601,712	4,608,494
SUSLO Special US Liaison Office	12	0	0	-	-
IJC - International Joint Commission	9	0	0	-	-
DHS – Attaché	1	0	0	-	104,460*
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>777</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>96,697,380</b>	<b>100,068,566</b>

\* Final FY-08 Targets are not yet confirmed

- Blanks in the Resource field indicate agency representatives were either not available or not able to provide the resource figures.

## OVERVIEW

The management team at Embassy Ottawa, although leanly staffed, provides a high level of services to the mission – which is not surprising given its location in a first-world country, with an educated and skilled local workforce. Visitors to the chancery, completed and occupied in November 1999, often liken its interior to that of an old-time ocean liner. Today, after more than eight years of use, the building shows little signs of wear and tear. The excellent condition of the facility is indicative of the shipshape staff that maintains it and supports its occupants.

The mission has 777 U.S. direct-hire positions, 25 LE American positions, and 264 Foreign Service national positions representing more than 30 entities using ICASS services. These numbers include the six consulates general, one APP, eight airport preclearance operations, and staff embedded in Canadian military facilities. Providing support to such a large and diverse community is further complicated by its dispersion across five time zones, with a little snow thrown in during the long, northern winter, interfering with even the best-laid travel plans.

As noted above, and elsewhere in this report, staffing at Mission Canada is generally lean, including in the management sector. The Rightsizing Review of Mission Canada, dated March 23, 2007, contains the following analysis of mission staffing by the Office of Rightsizing:

Because so many Americans work outside official buildings, because almost all U.S. personnel rent lodgings on the open market rather than living in government owned or leased buildings, because living in Canada is much like living in the United States, and because of Mission Canada's effort to keep support staffing lean and efficient, the Program Assessment Rating Tool ratio for Mission Canada is currently an eye-popping 61:1.<sup>3</sup>

Although lean staffing is considered to be high praise in government operations, Mission Canada may be reaching the point where it will not be able to provide essential services to its clientele in a timely and properly controlled manner. Budget reductions in recent years have forced the mission to make a number of difficult decisions to cut services or positions, including cuts in official residence expense (ORE), in-country travel, and American officer positions. There is an immediate need for additional resources to provide appropriate oversight of living quarters allowance (LQA) for CPB preclearance staff, as discussed later in this section.

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<sup>3</sup>U.S. Mission to Canada (and U.S. Mission to ICAO), M/R Rightsizing Review, March 23, 2007

## MANAGEMENT SECTION

As noted in its strategic plan, Mission Canada has a management team focused on continual improvement, seeking innovative ways to reduce costs, improve quality, and increase effective service delivery. The embassy has implemented a number of initiatives to meet these goals, including certification under an internationally recognized quality management system, converting U.S. direct-hire positions to LE staff, conducting mission-wide HR staff meetings to improve services, centralizing some information management functions, and using energy conservation measures to save money.

Overall management services at Embassy Ottawa received high scores on two recent assessments: OIG's workplace and quality of life questionnaires and the 2008 ICASS survey. In both assessments, Embassy Ottawa's scores were higher than the worldwide averages for the majority of the rated management services.

In addition, employees in both the embassy and the consulates general expressed dissatisfaction with some elements of human resources and financial management services, and these two functions received relatively lower scores on OIG's questionnaires – although the scores were still higher than the worldwide averages for those services. These issues are addressed in greater detail later in this report.

The management counselor is an adept leader, fully engaged on all issues while empowering his experienced American and LE staff to manage their programs as they see fit. Regular communication on management issues, discussed below, would strengthen the connection between the embassy and the constituent posts.

### ISO 9000

In June 2006, Embassy Ottawa's entire management section received ISO 9000 certification. ISO 9000 is an internationally recognized quality management system, organized and monitored by the International Standards Organization in Geneva. Its basic tenets are to document the processes, follow those documented processes, measure the efforts, and continually strive for better quality. Embassy Ottawa documented 40 processes in its financial management, HR, facilities management, information management, general services, and community liaison offices to obtain certification.

Following certification, the management team developed a management affairs strategic plan to direct the mission's quality management system and established monthly meetings to review progress on each goal in the plan. In interviews with the OIG team, management staff reported that ISO 9000 has practical applications in their daily work and helps them measure the quality of the services they provide. Embassy Ottawa intends to expand ISO 9000 to its larger consulates general in 2008, which should improve management services at those posts.

## Support to Constituent Posts

Management support from Embassy Ottawa to the constituent posts is generally good, but there is a perception among some employees at these posts that the embassy – or even other consulates general in the mission – receive better services and/or more funding. Consulate general employees, rightly or wrongly, believe they are excluded from decision making and are not kept informed of developments during the decision making process. These views are particularly prevalent at Consulates General Vancouver and Montreal, which gave lower relative scores for management services on OIG's workplace and quality of life questionnaires and on the 2008 ICASS survey.

Staffing gaps and less experienced local employees at these two posts may partially explain their somewhat lower assessment of the quality of management services, but all of the consulates general expressed some dissatisfaction with services from the embassy. All would benefit from more frequent and regular contact and communication with the embassy. While e-mail, teleconferences, and DVCs are wonderful tools, they cannot completely replace the benefits of face-to-face meetings and hands-on training.

Embassy Ottawa recognizes the need for more communication and visits between the embassy and the consulates general but was not fully aware of the level of dissatisfaction at the constituent posts. With limited funds at its disposal, the embassy has made a number of cuts in services in the past few years to fund other, higher priority items. In-country travel of management employees for on-the-job training and consultations – including information management staff, as discussed later in this report – has been a lower priority. As a result, employees at constituent posts are not receiving the level of services that they expect, information management equipment is not being properly maintained or upgraded, and much time is wasted sending inadequate documentation on such things as vouchers and position reviews back and forth between the embassy and constituent posts.

**Recommendation 21:** Embassy Ottawa should request funding from the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs to provide on-the-job training, support, and consultations to its constituent posts on human resources, financial management, general services, and information management. (Action: Embassy Ottawa)

A staffing gap at Consulate General Montreal has led to less than satisfactory management support at the post. The OIG team made an informal recommendation for the embassy to pursue the temporary assignment of a qualified management officer to the consulate general.

## Funding for Converted Positions

Embassy Ottawa took the lead in responding to the Under Secretary for Management's request to convert direct-hire American positions to LE staff as a cost-saving measure and gave up two American positions in FY 2007. The Department, however, does not have a reciprocal process to render savings from such conversions back to posts to hire and train replacement LE staff, and the embassy did not receive funding in the ICASS budget to replace the American positions. Upon instruction from WHA, the embassy requested the money from the contingency fund. The need to make this request demonstrates a disconnect between the abolishment of direct-hire American positions and posts receiving funding for replacement LE staff. The contingency fund was not designed for this purpose, and the Department needs a process to transfer funding to posts when direct-hire American positions are converted to LE staff.

**Recommendation 22:** The Under Secretary for Management, in coordination with the Bureau of Resource Management, should develop a process to automatically provide funding to hire and train replacement locally employed staff for missions that abolish direct-hire American positions as a cost-saving measure. (Action: M, in coordination with RM)

## INTERNATIONAL COOPERATIVE ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SERVICES

ICASS is effective in all management services at Embassy Ottawa and, to a somewhat lesser degree, its constituent posts. The embassy and Consulates General Toronto and Calgary received higher scores than the worldwide average for “Overall ICASS Services” on the 2008 ICASS survey. Consulates General Halifax, Montreal, and Vancouver were slightly below the worldwide average for overall services, although they scored higher on several specific line items. These results indicate a service-oriented management sector and well-managed ICASS management team for the embassy, with less than average services for most of the consulates general.

Embassy Ottawa has one of the highest ratios of direct-hire Americans to ICASS support staff in the world. Several mission employees are designated by WHA as “super users” who work on improvements to worldwide financial systems. The mission is often used as a pilot for new systems because it is close to Washington, is a complex mission with many constituent posts, and is staffed by some of the most experienced and highly skilled employees in the Department.

However, the relatively lower quality of services at Mission Canada’s constituent posts is an indicator of potential problems in communication, training, and/or staffing at these posts. In fact, staffing gaps in management positions and officers serving out of cone have not provided suitable leadership to management staff at several of the consulates general. Low averages for ICASS services at constituent posts, particularly Montreal and Vancouver, indicate the ICASS council needs to review the allocation of resources to determine if mission-wide staffing has kept up with growth in mission programs and other agency staffing.

The Ottawa ICASS council is comprised of 31 entities, with a newly appointed chairman. Meetings are scheduled when the budget targets are presented, when there is a salary change or a change in LE staff benefits, and when there are requests for new positions. The charter is complete and there is a memorandum of understanding with the management section for ICASS services dated 1996. All 31 entities have a current ICASS subscription of service.

## Service Standards

ICASS service standards were last updated in FY 2004 and are available on the mission web site. Uniform service standards for ICASS are being developed on a worldwide basis by the Regional Initiatives Council<sup>4</sup> through its Collaborative Management Initiative. The purpose of universal standards is to promote better practices, centralize and regionalize services, and provide access to more reliable data from which to make informed decisions. The ultimate goal is to improve performance and effective use of resources across the Department. Embassy Ottawa provided input to the Collaborative Management Initiative using its ICASS standards of service. According to the current timeline, uniform service standards will be sent to the Washington-based ICASS Executive Board for approval and posted on the ICASS web site by September 30, 2008.

## Importance of National Security Decision Directive-38 Partial-Year-Invoices

Since September 11, 2001, Embassy Ottawa's national security responsibilities have required additional law enforcement staff. The growth in staff, proximity of the border, and possible reluctance of some U.S. federal agencies to provide the embassy with complete information on the number of personnel in Canada may make the ICASS billing process incomplete. Management relies on the validity of ICASS invoices signed off by the heads of agencies to reflect accurately the total number of staff receiving ICASS services. The annex to this report addresses the issue of paying for security services.

New direct-hire positions or additions to an existing office under chief of mission authority are approved under the NSDD-38 process. According to the embassy, 390 U.S. direct-hire positions have been added to the mission since 2001. As part of the approval process, agencies are notified of the cost of each position so they can provide funding for ICASS services to support new staffing increases. If management does not have an accurate count of employees, bills cannot be prepared. The size of Canada and ease of crossing the border make it difficult for management at the embassy to be certain of exactly how many other agency employees are in-country but located apart from the embassy or constituent posts.

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<sup>4</sup>The Regional Initiatives Council, composed of the executive directors of each regional bureau and senior directors from the Office of Management Policy, Rightsizing, and Innovation (M/PRI), and chartered by the Under Secretary for Management, was formed in 2006 to address management issues that cross regional bureau lines. The ICASS Service Center director participates as an ex-officio member of the council.

At Embassy Ottawa, agencies are billed for ICASS services using the approved ICASS mechanism, the NSDD-38 partial year invoice. Each year the head of each agency verifies workload counts that list the staffing for that agency. For ICASS to maintain an adequate budget, all agencies must be billed on the NSDD-38 invoice, and to prepare the invoice ICASS staff must be informed of new arrivals. To be assured that all staff under the chief of mission are identified, the embassy needs to have each agency head verify the number of direct-hire American employees and eligible family members.

**Recommendation 23:** Embassy Ottawa, in coordination with the Bureaus of Western Hemisphere Affairs, Diplomatic Security, and Resource Management, should review all positions added to the mission since 2001 to verify that agencies have been providing the funding necessary to operate support services and bill the agencies for any missing funds. (Action: Embassy Ottawa, in coordination with WHA, DS, and RM)

## HUMAN RESOURCES

The HR section at Embassy Ottawa, although staffed with experienced and dedicated American and LE staff, has a less than stellar customer service reputation that dates back to the 1995 OIG inspection report. The management counselor and the American HR officer are aware of the section's reputation, and are actively seeking to improve it, with some success. Four new employees have been hired in the past year, bringing fresh ideas and new skills to the section, and one of the new employees was recently trained as a CAJE evaluator to assist the sole existing evaluator with a huge surge in the CAJE workload. Last year the HR officer organized a mission-wide meeting to bring together HR employees from the embassy and the constituent posts, which was followed up this year with a mission-wide DVC meeting.

There are some indications that these measures are working, albeit slowly. Scores for HR services on the 2008 ICASS survey ranged from slightly above the worldwide averages to slightly below, and scores on OIG's workplace and quality of life questionnaires were in the same mid range.

## Realignment of Duties

The HR section has undergone a number of staffing changes in the past few years. The U.S. direct-hire deputy position, vacated last year, is slated to be abolished. Four of the eight LE staff members are recent hires, who have brought new skills and enthusiasm to the section, but who also require training and more hands-on supervision than their more experienced predecessors. The other four employees, with a combined total of more than 60 years of experience in the section, have struggled to adjust to the new employees, and the added workload entailed in assisting them and covering the more complex HR issues. Meanwhile, the overall workload has been expanding steadily since 2001, with the addition of almost 400 U.S. direct-hire positions to the mission. The HR section is one of the few sections in the mission that provides at least some services to all of these employees and their family members.

In addition to these mission-specific changes, the HR section has been challenged by almost constant changes in the HR field and the Department's HR processes and procedures in recent years, such as the introduction of the CAJE system in 2002. The distribution of duties within the section is no longer relevant to the size and content of the workload, and the lack of a deputy has resulted in an unwieldy span of control for the HR officer. In addition, with several long-term employees either eligible to retire now or soon to be eligible, it is imperative that remaining staff be able to perform their duties capably. A realignment of duties within the section to take advantage of new skill sets and address changes in requirements would improve operations, ensure continuity, and enable the section to provide better service to its clients.

**Recommendation 24:** Embassy Ottawa should realign duties within the human resources section to address new requirements, take advantage of new skill sets, cross-train all employees in the full range of human resources functions, and improve customer service. (Action: Embassy Ottawa)

## Computer Aided Job Evaluations

The CAJE process, which is used by the Department to classify LE staff positions at all overseas posts, is a major source of frustration for managers and LE staff throughout Mission Canada – as well as for the HR employees who perform the function. A *State Magazine* article describing CAJE when it was introduced in 2002 began, “Few employee issues generate more interest or heated discussion among our 40,000 Foreign Service national colleagues than job classification.”<sup>5</sup> This is certainly true at Mission Canada today.

Whenever significant changes are made in the duties and responsibilities of an LE staff position, or a new position is created, the responsible supervisor must create a position description that accurately reflects the prescribed duties and submit it to the HR section for classification via CAJE. This is just the first step in an interactive, seven-step process, and each step is vulnerable to delays. A position cannot be advertised or filled until all seven steps are completed, so CAJE delays can severely hamper operations. For example, in the consular section at Consulate General Toronto a grade 4 LE staff member was acting in the equivalent of a grade 8 supervisory position for months pending completion of a CAJE review that would allow the post to properly advertise and fill the position. The OIG team also noted problems related to CAJE delays in Montreal and Calgary.

For the most part, the CAJE delays at Mission Canada are simply a matter of too much work for too few people. Until recently, Embassy Ottawa had only one CAJE-certified evaluator in the HR section, a senior LE staff employee with other complex duties. This was not a problem in 2005 when there were 11 CAJE requests, or in 2006 when there were 26. In 2007, however, the number of requests surged to a whopping 88, of which 51 were completed by the sole evaluator. Partly in response to this workload, the management counselor transferred the local employment advisor position from the management section to the HR section in November 2007, and the incumbent was subsequently trained and CAJE-certified.

The addition of a second CAJE-certified evaluator has begun to alleviate the situation, but there is still a significant backlog to be completed, and the HR section has already received 37 new CAJE requests in 2008. The OIG team made informal recommendations that additional HR staff be CAJE-certified and that the embassy request temporary duty assistance to address the backlog.

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<sup>5</sup>*State Magazine*, February 2002, p.18

In addition to the above, the OIG team found several position descriptions in various mission offices that should be reviewed by the supervisors and revised as needed.

### Financial Management Section

During the initial mission CAJE process, the voucher examiners at Embassy Ottawa were graded lower than many of their counterparts around the world. Apparently the embassy used a standard voucher examiner position description, without including the more complex duties performed by some of the embassy's examiners. The position descriptions are being rewritten to reflect the complex duties and the OIG team made an informal recommendation that the revised position descriptions be submitted for a CAJE review.

### Consulate General Vancouver

The local-hire investigator in the regional security office at Consulate General Vancouver is performing duties that are not reflected in the current position description. The OIG team made an informal recommendation that the RSO prepare a new position description and submit it to Embassy Ottawa for CAJE review.

### Consulate General Montreal

The visa clerks in the NIV unit at Consulate General Montreal may be performing duties that are not accurately reflected in their position descriptions. The OIG team made an informal recommendation that the NIV unit supervisor review the position descriptions and, if necessary, revise them and submit them to Embassy Ottawa for CAJE review.

As discussed in the consular affairs section of this report, Consulate General Montreal has reorganized its IV unit into two teams, which has changed the duties of some employees in the section. The OIG team made an informal recommendation that the IV unit supervisor revise the affected position descriptions and submit them to Embassy Ottawa for CAJE review.

## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The financial management section provides solid support to embassy staff and constituent posts at this multimillion dollar embassy. One of the primary functions of the section is to provide accounting and voucher processing to the embassy, six consulates general, one APP, and other agencies totaling over \$23 million annually. Led by an experienced financial management officer, backed up by seasoned LE staff, the section is skilled and considered to be among the strongest in the world by Department financial managers. The section is often asked to participate in pilot projects and become trainers for other financial management staff around the world.

While its external reputation is superb, the view from inside the mission is not as good universally. While financial functions were rated above the world-wide average by embassy users on the 2008 ICASS survey, scores from the consulates general were mostly lower than average, particularly on voucher processing. Improvements for voucher processing are discussed below. The results were similar on OIG's workplace and quality of life questionnaires, with the consulates general rating overall management of financial services below the world-wide average and the embassy rating the services somewhat higher than average.

### Improvements in Voucher Processing

Consulate general LE staff have not been properly trained on vouchers and do not appear to know what information is sufficient to process a voucher. Only one consulate general employee has taken the overseas voucher examination course offered on-line through the Foreign Service Institute, and travel funds have not been available for embassy financial management staff to visit the constituent posts to provide on-site training. The embassy has developed checklists and written guidance, but the American officers are not diligent in reviewing the paperwork before it is sent to the embassy.

Many vouchers are complex permanent change-of-station travel vouchers that are more difficult and time consuming to process than temporary duty vouchers. Because of its proximity to the United States, many employees assigned to Mission Canada arrive and depart via privately owned vehicle and use alternate routing, which result in more complex cost-constructive travel vouchers.

The OIG team made several informal recommendations to improve voucher processing, including training for consulate general staff, travel by the embassy financial management employees to the constituent posts, and better review of vouchers

by managers before submission to the embassy. Improving voucher processing in the consulates general will ensure timely payments to staff and vendors, as well as avoiding any late payment penalties.

## Exchange Rate Gains and Losses

Embassy Ottawa is not fully reimbursed for exchange rate losses. The Department's formula does not recognize payments made in U.S. dollars when the value varies with the exchange rate. For example, cost-of-living allowance rates change depending on the exchange rate, and payments made through the American Payroll system are paid in U.S. dollars. However, cost-of-living allowance payments are not factored in when the Department calculates exchange rate losses/gains. This particularly impacts ICASS, because the target levels for ICASS are usually set in May, five to six months before the end of the fiscal year. As a result, there can be no adjustment for any changes to the exchange rate that take place in the last half of the year. If a post suffers an exchange rate loss and must pay out more in cost-of-living allowance payments, the post must absorb this increased cost.

Other examples are in-country travel and representation expenses. American officers are encouraged to open local currency accounts so the post can reimburse their local expenses in local currency, but the post cannot force them to open an account. Officers who do not have local currency accounts are reimbursed using electronic funds transfer to their U.S. dollar accounts. These expenses are not, therefore, factored into the exchange rate loss/gain calculation.

Historically, the U.S. dollar has been stronger than the Canadian dollar, in which case there was no loss to the mission. With the weaker U.S. dollar and the stream of payments in dollars continuing, the formula is not a fair representation of the actual exchange rate losses Mission Canada is facing.

**Recommendation 25:** Embassy Ottawa should request the Bureau of Resource Management to revise the formula to reflect the totality of the impact of exchange rate losses and gains on the mission's resources. (Action: Embassy Ottawa)

## Reconciliation for Living Quarters Allowance

Embassy Ottawa does not have a formal process for ensuring that annual reconciliations for LQA are completed. Department regulations are specific as to the annual reconciliation, but employees need to be reminded of the requirement. Pay

slips and receipts for expenses need to be kept and presented at the time of reconciliation. Without a rigorously enforced policy to complete the annual reconciliation, employees can depart on reassignment and still owe money to the U.S. government. This recently happened in one consulate general. The OIG team made an informal recommendation for Embassy Ottawa to require mission employees to complete the annual living quarters allowance reconciliation.

## International Civil Aviation Organization Reimbursements

ICASS services to International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) are being paid by the embassy's program allotment. There are four ICAO staff, using the full range of ICASS services. The cost of services for FY 2008 is estimated at \$145,800, which may or may not be an accurate bill for services. The embassy should prepare a baseline review of ICASS services provide and to determine a satisfactory reimbursement with the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs if necessary. An informal recommendation was made.

## GENERAL SERVICES AND FACILITIES MAINTENANCE

Embassy Ottawa is fortunate to have two exceptionally able management officers serving as supervisory general services officer and facilities manager. The majority of their scores on the 2008 ICASS survey were higher than the worldwide averages. A major element contributing to this success is the outstanding team of LE staff, who are experienced and knowledgeable in their respective fields, committed to providing excellent service, and motivated to help their associates in the consulates general. Specific areas where some problems exist or best practices have been devised, are discussed below.

### Motor Pool/Vehicle Safety Program

The motor pool supervisor has promoted driver education and safety training consistently at Embassy Ottawa, in conjunction with the post occupational safety and health officer. The training is done via personal training sessions and driver education tapes – especially for the Marine security guards who do not have drivers and are in a self-drive mode.

Until recently, the embassy had experienced only one minor vehicle accident in the last year. However, from December 2007 through February 2008, there have been four reportable accidents, three of which involved the Marine security guards.

Because two of the accidents may have been caused by winter driving conditions, specific training in this area would be in order. Maneuvering their vehicles in the confines of the chancery parking area has also been a problem. The OIG team made informal recommendations on both these issues.

## Inventory Control/Property Management (Best Practice)

The warehouse supervisor and the storekeeper have developed a best practice for inventory control of the Ambassador and DCM residences. Every piece of property at both residences has been digitally photographed along with its property number so that any item can be identified and traced by record book or by computer.

## Procurement and Receiving

In reviewing procurement and receiving, the OIG team found that some confusion had arisen concerning procurement procedures. The OIG team informally suggested that the embassy update and reissue the management instruction on purchasing goods and services for the U.S. government, which was last issued in 2003. The embassy immediately updated and reissued this management instruction.

## Ecology Fair/Waste Management (Best Practice)

Embassy Ottawa has made the “greening” of mission operations a priority, and it is included as a goal in the management affairs strategic plan. The conservation program began as a cost-saving measure several years ago and has blossomed into a mission-wide commitment. Recycling bins are readily available throughout the mission, including at the consulates general, and their use is encouraged. In the embassy building, which receives generous amounts of natural light in its interior atrium, only one-half of the lights are turned on with no apparent detriment.

In early March 2008, the general services and facilities maintenance sections sponsored an ecology fair in the embassy auditorium. The fair was the culmination of a major effort to track embassy-generated waste – in which the post actually measured the pounds of paper, plastic, and other recyclables that were thrown out unseparated and found that 39 percent of the material sent to the landfill was potentially recyclable. Booths at the fair displayed graphically the breakout of the “waste audit” and what could have been recycled. Other booths had examples of regular light bulbs and compact fluorescent light bulbs, which are 75 percent more efficient, and the differences in brightness and energy usage. Again, graphs were used to portray how much in energy costs could be saved if the embassy buildings and employee

residences were fitted with compact fluorescent light bulbs. (Mission Canada families' savings could be as high as \$85,000.) Led by the Ambassador, many embassy employees attended the fair.

## Safety, Fire, and Environmental Management Issues

Consulate General Vancouver, located in a high-rise building, has an unusual set up for egress in the event of a fire or other emergency requiring evacuation. Although the basic requirement for two exits is met, and the most recent fire and safety inspection did not recommend changes, the location of the exits is not readily apparent. The OIG team made an informal recommendation that more exit lights be installed to direct evacuees to the exits. There also is a fire door with signage that is intended to assist but may in fact confuse. The OIG team made an informal recommendation that the signage be reviewed.

Several issues related to cramped working conditions, space utilization, work station problems, and environmental concerns at Consulates General Toronto and Montreal are discussed in the consular affairs section of this report.

There are long standing safety issues in the principal officer residence in Halifax that require some redesign work and reconstruction to protect staff and guests from serious injury. The facility maintenance officer has discussed these issues with OBO, but the repair work has not yet been accomplished. The OIG team informally recommended that the facility manager work closely with OBO to arrange funding for completion of this priority project.

## Residence Maintenance in Vancouver and Montreal

Cutbacks in ORE staff at Mission Canada for budget reasons is having a detrimental impact on management staff resources at Consulates General Vancouver and Montreal. The principal officer residences at these consulates general are over 100 years old and require on-going maintenance. Management staff at the consulates general must be at the houses to meet contractors, oversee the work, and turn the security systems on and off. In the past, these duties were covered by ORE staff at the residences. An informal recommendation was made for Embassy Ottawa to providing training to consulate general staff in time management.

## Montreal Office Space

Consulate General Montreal leases space in a 23-story office tower in downtown Montreal with one other tenant, the private company that owns the building. The consulate general occupies the 19th and 20th floors and a portion of the ground floor. If the mission is able to exercise all the option periods in the lease, which is under dispute, the consulate general could remain at the present location until December 31, 2015. However, the current space may not be sufficient for consulate general staff, including other agencies, and no additional space is available in the building. The consulate general is looking at alternative sites and will be working with DS and OBO to coordinate an on-site visit to review potential properties. Meanwhile, OBO is actively involved in settling the ongoing lease dispute for the current site.

## Marines Security Guard Quarters

The contract for landscaping and snow removal services for the Marine security guard quarters was allowed to lapse two years ago at the request of the then detachment commander. The effort by the Marines security guards to provide the services themselves has not proven effective. Accordingly, the facilities maintenance office should contract for landscaping and snow-removal services for the quarters. The OIG team made an informal recommendation to this end. Other types of maintenance and repair for the quarters, per 15 FAM 632.4, are covered in the lease with the landlord. The facilities maintenance office works with the Marine security guards to coordinate requests for repairs with the landlord and ensure results.

## LIVING QUARTERS ALLOWANCE

With a few exceptions, such as the Ambassador, DCM, consuls general, and Marine security guards, all Americans accredited to Mission Canada are housed under the LQA program. The majority of employees prefer LQA to assigned housing because of the flexibility it affords them in choosing their own style and location of housing, within established size and cost standards. However, there are employees who find LQA somewhat troublesome, mostly because of the initial costs to the employee before reimbursement begins. At the beginning of the process, employees can be out of pocket a considerable amount, because landlords require a first and last month rent payment to sign the lease, and the power company requires a refund-

able deposit to open an account. Another drawback to LQA, particularly for single or unaccompanied employees, is the time it takes to locate housing and arrange for utilities and other related items.

The OIG team found that employees who received good information about LQA costs and housing availability before arriving at their post were the most satisfied with the LQA program. All of the prearrival information that was reviewed by the OIG team was comprehensive and factual, but that has not always been the case. The OIG team made an informal recommendation that Embassy Ottawa conduct periodic reviews of prearrival information sent out by the embassy and the constituent posts to ensure that the information being provided is consistent, accurate, and comprehensive. The management counselor began this process during the inspection.

## Customs Border Patrol Preclearance

There are 482 CBP American employees stationed across Canada at preclearance operations in Halifax, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Winnipeg, Calgary, Edmonton, Vancouver, and Victoria. Although these employees are under chief of mission authority, they have very little affiliation with the mission, and have never participated in the mission's housing program. Currently, CBP manages the LQA program for its preclearance staff internally, with no involvement or oversight from the mission. CBP approves the leases and processes invoices for reimbursement through its Indianapolis finance office. No documentation is provided to the mission, and the leases are not entered into the Department's real property application database.

Under section 156 of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act (Public Law 101-246), responsibility for managing the overseas housing program was centralized in the Department of State to ensure coherent, cost-effective management of such programs worldwide. The single real property manager at a post, in this case the management counselor at Embassy Ottawa, is responsible for ensuring compliance with the policies and regulations governing LQA (15 FAM 212.1). (Security responsibilities for overseas housing are addressed in the annex to this report.)

Because CBP preclearance employees have never participated in the mission's housing program, Embassy Ottawa and its constituent posts do not have the resources to provide appropriate management and oversight of CBP's LQA program. This does not relieve the mission of the responsibility, however.

**Recommendation 26:** Embassy Ottawa should determine the additional resources needed, mission wide, to ensure that all proper internal controls required for the living quarters allowance program are applied to the Customs and Border Protection preclearance personnel assigned to Canada and request the necessary funds from the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs. (Action: Embassy Ottawa)

## LOCAL GUARD CONTRACTS

The six local guard contracts for Mission Canada, costing \$5.07 million annually, are time consuming to manage and do not utilize economies of scale to reduce costs. The requests for proposals attract few bidders, and the contracts are often awarded to companies that do not have the capacity to provide adequate staff or technical services. At present, two local guard contracts have been, or are being terminated for failure to deliver the product. Provinces in Canada have different laws governing the administration of contracts, but that should not preclude awarding a single, mission-wide contract that would incorporate the differences in provincial law.

A single contract could provide cost savings in the solicitation process and encourage experienced guard services companies to submit realistic pricing based on economies of scale. This would reflect true proposal costs for qualified and experienced personnel. For example, once established country-wide, a company could transfer staff between sites if shortages occur. A large single contract could be attractive to major international companies and considered viable despite the need to meet the licensing requirements of multiple provinces.

The surveillance detection portion of the existing contracts is coordinated by a regional security office employee to ensure quality control for the entire mission. This single point of contact has allowed the regional security office to manage the program more effectively. A single mission-wide contract would facilitate this coordination and result in further efficiencies and better command and control.

The Department is in the process of moving towards centralized contracting for local guard services, using acquisition staff in the Bureau of Administration to compete, award, and administer the contracts. A single, mission-wide local guard contract for Embassy Ottawa and its constituent posts would be an excellent candidate for acquisition by the Bureau of Administration; however, it is important that the Department receives accurate information to tailor the contract specifically for Mission Canada.

**Recommendation 27:** Embassy Ottawa, in coordination with the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, should request the Bureau of Administration to develop a contract to provide mission-wide local guard services for the embassy and its constituent posts. (Action: Embassy Ottawa, in coordination with DS)

## WINTER 2010 OLYMPICS

Planning for the Winter 2010 Olympic Games in Vancouver has already begun in WHA's Executive Office, Embassy Ottawa, and Consulate General Vancouver. The logistical and security support that will be required is not a small task. Two DS positions and one Foreign Service Olympic coordinator position have been created and will be filled in summer 2008. Consulate General Vancouver originally requested two additional Foreign Service positions (a general services officer and an office management specialist), but the bureau's executive office prefers to wait and see what the actual workload is and, if needed, what talent might be available in the local market. It is an issue that both the mission and the Department will continue to review.

## INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND INFORMATION SECURITY

Embassy Ottawa operates an extensive, mission-wide information management program that received generally good scores on OIG's workplace and quality of life questionnaires and the 2008 ICASS survey, with some minor exceptions. Communication and cooperation among information management staff at the embassy and its constituent posts is good, and the information management officer holds monthly round-table meetings with all the components via DVC. More on-site visits are needed, however, to provide the full range of information management support to the mission, as discussed in greater detail below.

A recent innovation in the mission's information management program is the introduction of regionalization, a technology-based upgrade path to provide better customer service and support. Regionalization is being accomplished in two phases. In phase one, already under way, the ClassNet servers and systems for Consulates General Quebec City and Halifax were effectively relocated from Washington, DC, to Embassy Ottawa, which means that most system administration and account management tasks can now be performed by the mission. Also completed in phase

one were changes that enable Embassy Ottawa to perform remote systems administration of unclassified systems at Consulates General Quebec City, Halifax, Montreal, and Calgary, reducing the need for full-time on-site systems administrators at these posts. The last portion of phase one, scheduled for completion in April 2008, is replacement of traditional, fat-client workstations with thin-client workstations. Particularly for ClassNet, thin-client workstations are more efficient, easier to manage, and more secure.

## Information Management Support to Constituent Posts

Embassy Ottawa is responsible for providing critical information management support services to clients in mission offices throughout Canada. The number of locations and multiplicity of systems and equipment creates unique challenges for the information management staff. While it is possible to perform some of the system administrative duties remotely, there are certain tasks that can only be accomplished on site by an information management specialist. Funding problems in recent years, however, have restricted travel to emergency visits only,

Because Consulates General Halifax and Quebec City and the APP in Winnipeg all lack a full-time information management specialist; it is especially important that the embassy coordinate and arrange for information management support at those posts. In addition, security regulations dictate that work performed on classified systems be done only by a cleared, American information management specialist. On the unclassified side, some of the LE staff information management specialists, particularly at Consulates General Calgary and Montreal, do not have the experience and knowledge necessary to troubleshoot complex system problems or perform major systems upgrades.

The Department approved and encouraged Mission Canada's regionalization efforts and provided \$110,000 in FY 2007 for remote access equipment and required information management staff travel. The embassy requested \$110,000 from WHA for required travel in FY 2008 to support regionalization. The Department provided no funding in FY 2008. Regionalization of information management support in Canada maximizes the effectiveness of highly trained American and LE staff. For example, moving unclassified computer support from Quebec City to Ottawa last year allowed the mission to eliminate an LE staff position in Quebec City. A minimum amount of travel is required to make regionalization work, while protecting the mission's information management systems and equipment. A recommendation was made earlier in this report for the Department to fund the necessary travel.

## Information System Security Officer

The information management staff at Mission Canada has over 1,000 customers spread across the country, and supports and maintains approximately 600 unclassified workstations and 100 classified workstations. Currently each post has assigned an individual to be the information system security officer and usually the officer's duties are a part-time, collateral duty. Embassy Ottawa requested a dedicated information system security officer position in its 2009 MSP as its highest information resource management priority. WHA approved the position and included it in the bureau's 2009 Bureau Strategic Plan.

## Training

The majority of direct-hire information management employees at Mission Canada have not received formal training on Windows 2000/2003-based products, which the Department is using to operate its unclassified and classified networks. Most of the information management specialists are more knowledgeable and experienced with the Department's legacy Windows NT 4.0 product line. The skills to operate and maintain a Windows 2000/2003-based system are significantly different than the legacy Windows NT 4.0 products. A number of the LE staff are also not fully trained on the newer Windows 2000/2003-based products. The OIG team made an informal recommendation for Embassy Ottawa to ensure that all mission information management employees receive the necessary training to operate and maintain the current generation of Windows 2000/2003-based systems.

Information management employees at Mission Canada do not have individual development plans, as required in 5 FAM 121. Individual development plans are an important tool to ensure that employees have the skills necessary to support mission programs and to encourage their own professional growth. Without such plans, managers are unaware of areas where training may be required, as evidenced by the lack of training on Windows 2000/2003-based products described above. The OIG team made an informal recommendation for the information management officer to ensure that all American information management employees have current individual development plans.

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The unclassified data traffic at Consulate General Toronto is transmitted using nonplenum data cabling that produces toxic fumes when burned. The OIG team made an informal recommendation to correct this health and safety hazard.

## Dedicated Internet Networks

Dedicated Internet network usage at Mission Canada is consistent with guidance disseminated in State cable 166377 (October 2006). The use of dedicated Internet networks is to provide services not currently provided on the Department's Open-Net Plus system. The public affairs section at Embassy Ottawa has seven dedicated Internet network workstations, which is more than the number required to meet the section's minimum business needs. The OIG team made an informal recommendation to reduce the number of workstations from seven to five.

State cable 166377 requires that the information management officer at post establish service level agreements with mission sections that operate dedicated Internet networks, which has not been done at Embassy Ottawa. The OIG team made an informal recommendation for Embassy Ottawa to establish the necessary service level agreements.

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## QUALITY OF LIFE

### COMMUNITY LIAISON OFFICES

Embassy Ottawa has two energetic and committed community liaison office (CLO) coordinators who split the duties of the position. Evaluations in the OIG questionnaires and comments from personal interviews during the inspection indicated a very favorable regard by the embassy community for their efforts and enthusiasm.

The coordinators have worked hard to expand the information sent to incoming American employees to ensure that they understand the challenges and requirements of serving in Ottawa, such as the need to find housing under the LQA system, and receive this information early enough to take action.

The coordinators have aggressively sought volunteers to serve as sponsors for new arrivals and have developed checklists of typical sponsor responsibilities. Recent experience seems to indicate a higher level of appreciation of the sponsors by those arriving. The coordinators are working closely with the Ambassador to emphasize the importance of the sponsor program to the post.

The coordinators have experienced some resistance by DHS CBP preclearance staff to their outreach. The coordinators have tried, unsuccessfully, to get e-mail contact information for newly assigned preclearance personnel in order to send them briefing information. It is also difficult to prepare required CLO school and employment reports, or even to pass along job vacancy announcements, without the preclearance families' information. The OIG team informally recommended that Embassy Ottawa work with CBP preclearance to improve communication and efforts to assist new employees and their families.

There is also an active CLO program at Consulate General Toronto with one CLO coordinator who works 20 hours per week. Because of her limited hours, the CLO coordinator focuses most of her efforts on the two areas that are most important to her customer base – family member employment and schools. As with her counterparts at the embassy, the CLO coordinator in Toronto has tried, unsuccess-



of complaints about medical care during an inspection visit to Consulate General Montreal. The embassy and several of the consulates general have agreements with local clinics to treat mission employees and their family members, and many families drive to the United States for routine medical care.

The Office of Medical Services is aware of the problems encountered by Mission Canada in getting access to medical care in country. As noted above, the current post report provides accurate information and advises incoming personnel to make arrangements for special medical needs before arriving in Canada. The regional medical officer visited Consulate General Montreal in January 2008 to pursue setting up agreements with local providers to provide medical access to consulate general personnel and their families. No agreements were finalized during the visit, but the regional medical officer is optimistic an agreement will be reached soon.

## Regional Psychiatrist Services

The regional psychiatrist visited Embassy Ottawa in January 2008, at the embassy's request, to conduct presentations on stress and to meet with individual members of the embassy community as needed. The psychiatrist did not visit any of the constituent posts, and employees at several of the posts told the OIG team that a visit from the psychiatrist would be beneficial. Given that Mission Canada is a sought-after assignment for employees coming out of extreme hardship and danger pay posts, there is a pool of employees who are particularly vulnerable to stress and related mental health problems. The OIG team made an informal recommendation that Embassy Ottawa request a regional psychiatrist visit for each of its constituent posts.

## EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY AND FEDERAL WOMEN'S PROGRAM

Embassy Ottawa has an active Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and Civil Rights Matters program in accordance with Department policy, which includes separate EEO and Federal Women's Programs. The EEO counselor reported that during the past three years, employees have filed no formal complaints. Moreover, no significant problems at the embassy came to the attention of the OIG team. Both American direct-hire employees and LE staff are aware of their rights and understand that they are covered under Department policies. Consulates General Toronto and Calgary also have appropriate programs. Consulate General Halifax has appropriate material on display and information on how to contact the EEO counselor in Ottawa for assistance.

Consulate General Montreal's EEO counselor departed post in July 2007, and the post is in the process of selecting a new counselor. There is no Federal Women's Programs coordinator, although one officer has expressed an interest in the position.  
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The EEO counselor at Consulate General Vancouver is from another agency, and no problems were indicated with the program. There is no currently appointed Federal Women's Program coordinator.

## MANAGEMENT CONTROLS

Embassy Ottawa's annual chief of mission certification for FY 2007 was submitted to the Department with no vulnerabilities identified on the risk assessments.<sup>6</sup> The OIG team reviewed internal controls throughout the mission and found no major problems. The management counselor at Embassy Ottawa is designated as the embassy's management controls coordinator. The constituent posts fill out the risk assessments and send a certification to Embassy Ottawa.

The embassy recently issued an updated list of its designations for specific responsibilities; however, the designations lists at some of the constituent posts are outdated or incomplete. The OIG team made an informal recommendation that all constituent posts update and reissue their respective designations of responsibilities, using the embassy list as a guide.

### Consular Controls

The OIG team conducted audits of consular internal controls at all visited constituent posts and the embassy, including counting passports, consular reports of birth abroad, and nonimmigrant and immigrant visa foils. The results were in good order and can be properly accounted. Unannounced cash counts are being conducted as required, and cash counts observed by the OIG team were done properly. Accountable consular officers have been assigned at all the posts and follow guidance regulating controlled equipment, consular computer systems, and controlled consular items.

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<sup>6</sup>OMB Circular A-123 defines management's responsibility for internal controls in Federal agencies issued under the authority of the Federal Manager's Financial Integrity Act of 1982, codified in 31 U.S.C. 3512. In response to this requirement, each chief of mission annually completes a certification verifying internal controls are in place to meet the intent of the circular.

## Financial Services

During the inspection the embassy and all constituent posts completed the monthly cashier verification with no issues. All cashier transactions come through Embassy Ottawa for processing into the official accounting records. A sample of vouchers from ORE, representation, post assignment travel, and financial transactions were reviewed at the embassy without issue. Standard operating procedures and administrative instructions are current and are used to ensure compliance with U.S. government policy.

Unliquidated obligations for prior years were low, indicating a high degree of control on expenditures every year. This control is maintained in a scarce resource environment by allowing only American certifying officers to certify funds availability and approve journal vouchers. End-of-year spending was primarily on office equipment and computer equipment. An informal recommendation was made for Consulate General Vancouver to implement the time and attendance program electronically for each timekeeper.

During a review of ORE vouchers, the OIG team found that overtime paid to the Ambassador's ORE staff for working representation events was charged to the program allotment. The amounts ranged from \$800 a month to \$4,000 a month on the sample of vouchers reviewed. ORE staff may work overtime for representation events, but it must be charged to the correct allotment in accordance with 3 FAM 3256 (1).

**Recommendation 31:** Embassy Ottawa should review all fiscal year 2008 official residence expense vouchers, verify that overtime was charged to the correct allotment, and make corrections as needed. (Action: Embassy Ottawa)

## Use of U.S. Government Vehicles

Embassy Ottawa and its constituent posts are allowing certain duty personnel, such as the RSOs and security engineering staff, to utilize self-drive U.S. government vehicles for home-to-office transportation per 14 FAM 418.2-4(4). The mission does not distinguish between vehicles used for official business purposes and other authorized use as outlined in 05 State 082764. The embassy has interpreted the regulations to allow use of a government vehicle at no charge to the employee once a letter of designation has been signed by the chief of mission. The letters on file

state that the vehicle is authorized in performance of duties, including periods of time when the officer is subject to recall as the duty officer. There is no documentation in the daily vehicle usage record that distinguishes other authorized use for the purposes of specific duty status from home-to-office transportation.

Security officers interviewed by the OIG team believe their use of official vehicles for daily transportation to and from their place of residence is authorized by the chief of mission and that there should be no charge for such use. The mission's broad interpretation of the guidance on other authorized use policy has led the security and security engineering officers to incorrectly assume that they may use official vehicles for home-to-office transportation without charge on a daily basis.

Embassy Ottawa's policy on home-to-office transportation is not in conformance with 14 FAM 418 .2-3 (D). The mission does not document the unique and unusual circumstances that would justify the use of official vehicles for duty officers, nor does the letter of authorization include a written finding specifying the duration of the approval. Finally, the policy does not include a provision for recordkeeping by duty officers to document periods of approved other authorized use from regular business use.

The use of official vehicles to transport duty officers outside of normal working hours may not be the most cost-effective means of providing transportation. The motor pool records do not demonstrate a pattern of recalls to the mission; the vast majority of entries show normal home-to-office transport during working hours.

**Recommendation 32:** Embassy Ottawa should revise the mission-wide policy on use of official vehicles to conform to current Department directives. (Action: Embassy Ottawa)

## General Services Operations

In the general services operations credit card statements and associated documentation are thoroughly reviewed and signed by the approving official before submitting to the Financial Management Center voucher examiner for processing and payment. The travel card statements and associated documentation, as submitted by Carlson Wagonlit Travel, are reviewed and signed by the general services office travel assistant and the approving officer before submitting to the Financial Management Center voucher examiner for processing and payment.

One of the strongest improvements in management controls was at the Consulate General Vancouver where additional staff, newly hired, enabled the management officer to separate the receiving and purchasing duties. Inventories at the embassy and all constituent posts were within standards. A random survey of each inventory was conducted and checked against the actual property. There were no discrepancies.

## Usage of Premium Class Transportation

When the OIG team reviewed usage of premium class travel, they discovered there were no instances of first class travel usage and 33 instances of business class travel. Of these, 14 represented intercity Canada Rail tickets, wherein business class must be purchased to guarantee a seat selection. The other 19 represented air travel in excess of 14 hours, each of which had a DS-4087 approval form attached. All premium class travel was performed in accordance with Department travel policies.

## Expired Medications

In January 2008, a Department training team visited Embassy Ottawa to conduct weapons of mass destruction general awareness training. As part of the exercise, the training team provided the embassy with a stock of the nerve agent antidote atropine. The embassy subsequently discovered that the atropine has an expiration date of October 2007. There are also expired stocks of cipro at Consulate General Toronto, and of cipro and atropine at Consulate General Vancouver. The OIG team made an informal recommendation that the embassy contact the Department and arrange for the appropriate disposal and replacement of the mission's expired medications.

## FORMAL RECOMMENDATIONS

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTION – INTERAGENCY COORDINATION

**Recommendation 1:** Embassy Ottawa should task the Department of Homeland Security attaché to develop an action plan to coordinate among all Department of Homeland Security constituent agencies operating in Canada the flow of information needed by the Ambassador to fulfill his responsibilities as chief of mission. (Action: Embassy Ottawa)

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTION – RIGHTSIZING

**Recommendation 2:** Embassy Ottawa should request the Department of Defense to relocate the Personnel Exchange Program staff from Embassy Ottawa to an appropriate U.S. military facility in the United States. (Action: Embassy Ottawa)

**Recommendation 3:** Embassy Ottawa should perform a baseline review of all programs and staffing authorized under chief of mission control, including the following elements: require each agency to present a justification for the need to operate programs in country and the need for each authorized position; create a priority list for staffing to decide which positions can no longer be justified in light of the Mission Strategic Plan goals and objectives and the limited financial resources allocated to the U.S. Mission to Canada. (Action: Embassy Ottawa)

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTION - LAW ENFORCEMENT COORDINATION

**Recommendation 4:** Embassy Ottawa should direct Consulates General Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal to reinvigorated or create their Law Enforcement Working Groups, meet on a regular schedule, and report the results of their meetings to Embassy Ottawa. (Action: Embassy Ottawa)

**Recommendation 5:** Embassy Ottawa should maintain a summary of proceedings of its Law Enforcement and Border Working Group meetings and should provide monthly summary reports in a front channel cable to the Department's Canada desk and other appropriate addressees with information copies to the consulates general. (Action: Embassy Ottawa)

**Recommendation 6:** The Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs should establish a Washington-based interagency U.S.-Canadian law enforcement and border working group to bring together representatives of all U.S. Government stakeholders to coordinate U.S.-Canadian law enforcement and border issues. (Action: WHA)

## PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

**Recommendation 7:** Embassy Ottawa should identify and implement a contacts management database for the public affairs section, with mission-wide availability that provides analytical reports as well as lists of names, and should train users in its operation. (Embassy Ottawa)

## VIRTUAL PRESENCE POSTS

**Recommendation 8:** Embassy Ottawa should establish cosponsors in the virtual presence post communities, announce visits and programs in advance on the virtual presence post web site, and submit reports to the webmaster afterwards for posting on the web site in order to more effectively reach target audiences. (Embassy Ottawa)

**Recommendation 9:** Embassy Ottawa should reassign responsibility for virtual presence post Nunavut from Consulate General Quebec City to a post better able to support visits and programs in the target community. (Embassy Ottawa)

## CONSULAR AFFAIRS

**Recommendation 10:** The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, in coordination with Embassy Ottawa and the Bureaus of Western Hemisphere Affairs and Consular Affairs, should develop and fund a plan to redesign the mezzanine waiting area of Consulate General Vancouver to include the installation of visa interview windows. (Action: OBO, in coordination with Embassy Ottawa, WHA, and CA)

**Recommendation 11:** Embassy Ottawa should develop and implement a mission-wide standard operating procedure to facilitate requests for expedited visa appointments, including expedited business visa requests, in a transparent, equitable manner. This should include guidance that sets professional standards for contact between consular employees and immigration attorneys. (Action: Embassy Ottawa)

**Recommendation 12:** Embassy Ottawa should bring the mission-wide visa referral policy into conformance with Department of State regulations. (Action: Embassy Ottawa)

**Recommendation 13:** Embassy Ottawa should adjust the mission-wide visa appointment system so that U.S.-based petition visa applicants cannot receive an appointment until the Petition Information Management System verification number has been assigned. (Action: Embassy Ottawa)

**Recommendation 14:** Embassy Ottawa should develop a formal mission-wide, written consular orientation program for entry-level officers on consular tours. (Action: Embassy Ottawa)

**Recommendation 15:** Embassy Ottawa should ask Citizenship and Immigration Canada to provide presentations on Canadian immigration regulations to the consular adjudicating officers, including explanations of the various ways a third-country national may obtain landed immigrant status in Canada. (Action: Embassy Ottawa)

**Recommendation 16:** Embassy Ottawa, in coordination with the Bureaus of Consular Affairs and Western Hemisphere Affairs, should request that the daily “Situation Room Reports,” written by port directors at preclearance facilities and at border crossings within or adjacent to a consular district, be made available to that district’s consular section chief. (Action: Embassy Ottawa, in coordination with CA and WHA)





## MANAGEMENT – MANAGEMENT CONTROLS

**Recommendation 31:** Embassy Ottawa should review all fiscal year 2008 official residence expense vouchers, verify that overtime was charged to the correct allotment, and make corrections as needed. (Action: Embassy Ottawa)

**Recommendation 32:** Embassy Ottawa should revise the mission-wide policy on use of official vehicles to conform to current Department directives. (Action: Embassy Ottawa)

## INFORMAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Informal recommendations cover matters not requiring action by organizations outside of the inspected unit and/or the parent regional bureau and are not 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.

### ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

The economic/ESTH section at Embassy Ottawa is top heavy, with three of its six officers having supervisory responsibilities.

**Informal Recommendation 1:** Embassy Ottawa should review staffing/portfolios in the economic/ environment, science and technology, and health section to reduce bureaucratic layers.

Providing the ESTH officer with some economic areas of responsibility would enhance overall economic/ESTH section integration.

**Informal Recommendation 2:** Embassy Ottawa should add an economic component to the junior environment, science and technology, and health officer's portfolio.

### POLITICAL AFFAIRS

There is no labor reporting planned by the political section at Embassy Ottawa, and little labor reporting has been done in the recent past; however, there is interest in Washington on the state of the labor movement in Canada.

**Informal Recommendation 3:** Embassy Ottawa should increase its labor reporting.

Background information and subject files in the political section are maintained by the reporting officers on their individually assigned computer hard drives and are deleted when an officer departs post.

**Informal Recommendation 4:** Embassy Ottawa should develop a method of electronic filing for the political section to ensure that background and subject information is accessible by all in the section.

## CONSTITUENT POST REPORTING

Communication between the embassy and the consulate general reporting officers is sporadic and consulate general reporting officers are often unsure of short-term embassy priorities. More coordination would strengthen overall mission reporting.

**Informal Recommendation 5:** Embassy Ottawa should institute regular video conferences with constituent posts to coordinate economic/ environment, science and technology, and health and political reporting.

Consulate General Toronto's consular and ELOs are not fully utilized in supporting the post's reporting.

**Informal Recommendation 6:** Consulate General Toronto should provide guidance and encourage consular and entry-level officers to contribute to post reporting.

Consulate General Toronto needs additional resources devoted to reporting.

**Informal Recommendation 7:** Embassy Ottawa should determine whether additional personnel resources, such as another locally employed staff member, could be devoted to Consulate General Toronto to support reporting.

Consulate General Toronto's reporting on trafficking-in-persons issues is insufficient.

**Informal Recommendation 8:** Consulate General Toronto should coordinate with the Department of Homeland Security/Immigration and Customs Enforcement at post to strengthen reporting on trafficking-in-persons.

Consulates General Vancouver and Montreal cannot fully meet their reporting responsibilities.

**Informal Recommendation 9:** Embassy Ottawa should work with Consulates General Vancouver and Montreal to authorize hiring of economic/political specialists at those posts.

## PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

Mid-level and entry-level officers beyond the public affairs section are seldom involved in activities that support public outreach. Drawing these officers into outreach efforts would benefit both the individuals and the mission.

**Informal Recommendation 10:** Embassy Ottawa should develop and implement a plan to include mid-level and entry-level officers in outreach activities to develop the officers' skills and to expand the pool of mission speakers.

The PAO at Embassy Ottawa controls the budget for all public diplomacy efforts throughout Canada. Several constituent posts find that this control makes their program planning difficult. Some suggested a formal public diplomacy budget allocation for each constituent post. In discussions with embassy management officers, the OIG team was told that formal allocations would pose problems for the embassy's financial management center and its public affairs section.

**Informal Recommendation 11:** Embassy Ottawa should provide each constituent post with an informal allocation for miscellaneous, nongrant local programs, with a requirement for final approval from the embassy Ottawa to commit funds.

Two local-hire position descriptions in the public affairs section at Embassy Ottawa do not reflect the actual duties performed by the employees, and some employees have inadequate backup to cover their absences. Two are overwhelmed with work, although others could do more.

**Informal Recommendation 12:** Embassy Ottawa should review local-hire position descriptions in the public affairs section and correct current inadequacies.

## CONSULAR AFFAIRS

### Nonimmigrant Visas

The NIV South waiting room at Consulate General Toronto is noisy, making it hard to hear the speaker system.

**Informal Recommendation 13:** Consulate General Toronto should obtain funds and install the Q-Matic traffic control numbering system for the Nonimmigrant Visa North and Nonimmigrant Visa South waiting rooms.

The NIV South interview window areas at Consulate General Toronto are too small for upgraded workstations.

**Informal Recommendation 14:** Consulate General Toronto should develop plans and request funding to reconfigure windows in Nonimmigrant Visa South so that they are large enough to install upgraded workstations.

The interview windows and LE staff in the NIV North section at Consulate General Toronto are underutilized.

**Informal Recommendation 15:** Consulate General Toronto should make greater use of the interviewing windows and office space located in Nonimmigrant Visa North, including but not limited to: intake, biometrics, and data entry of U.S.-based petition visa cases, and the nonimmigrant visa unit chief should ensure a more balanced workload among locally employed staff.

Consulate General Montreal's NIV and IV officers have a hard time hearing clients and each other.

**Informal Recommendation 16:** Consulate General Montreal should reconfigure the nonimmigrant visa and immigrant visa interview window areas to include additional sound suppression material.

Consulate General Toronto sometimes has LE staff assist the contract facilitators working outside the consular hard line in NIV South. No direct-hire American or LE staff should work outside the consular hard line.

**Informal Recommendation 17:** Consulate General Toronto should employ additional contract facilitators for visa operations, as required.

Embassy Ottawa developed a “cascade” NIV appointment system that features shorter waiting times for students and local residents and longer waits for U.S.-based applicants. There is no written description of this dynamic and complex system, and the employee who developed it is leaving this summer.

**Informal Recommendation 18:** Embassy Ottawa should develop a written key explaining exactly how the nonimmigrant visa appointment system works.

Some visa referrals in the mission have been made without a proper paper trail and personnel have not been trained in the referral system.

**Informal Recommendation 19:** Embassy Ottawa should require formal training on visa referral regulations for mission personnel as a prerequisite for making referrals.

Consulate General Toronto instituted a team approach in the consular section, partly to provide opportunities for ELOs to gain managerial experience. Recent changes in lines of responsibility may eliminate that opportunity.

**Informal Recommendation 20:** Consulate General Ottawa should reinstitute the practice of having entry level officers in the consular section rate the locally employed staff team leaders and review performance evaluations of all other team members.

Consular section chiefs and/or visa unit and ACS chiefs at Mission Canada should introduce their ELOs and LE staff, including the fraud investigators, to points of contact within Canadian government agencies to develop key points of contact.

**Informal Recommendation 21:** Embassy Ottawa should ensure that consular section chiefs and/or visa unit and American citizens services chiefs introduce entry-level officers and locally employed staff, including the fraud investigators, to key points of contact within Canadian government agencies.

## AMERICAN CITIZENS SERVICES

Consulate General Vancouver does not have a designated secondary location for the Consular Emergency Task Force.

**Informal Recommendation 22:** Consulate General Vancouver should identify an alternate location from which the Consular Emergency Task Force could operate in a crisis.

Consulate General Montreal is not keeping track of and providing regular visits to its incarcerated American citizens.

**Informal Recommendation 23:** Consulate General Montreal should determine the number and location of all American citizens incarcerated within its district and institute and maintain a tracking system for consular officer visits to American citizens in jail.

## IMMIGRANT VISAS

There are too many errors printed on immigrant visas.

**Informal Recommendation 24:** The immigrant visa unit officers in Montreal should do random checks of completed immigrant visas for errors.

## FRAUD PREVENTION AND INTERNAL CONTROLS

To help investigate fraud, more American officers should have access to the Nexis-Lexis database.

**Informal Recommendation 25:** The visa unit chief, American citizens services chief, and assistant regional security officer-investigator should each have individual access to Lexis-Nexis.

Adjudicating officers are concerned whether some categories of applicants are using their visas correctly.

**Informal Recommendation 26:** Posts should conduct validation studies using methodologies that will produce a substantive, useful result.

Regulations for B-1 visas for domestic employees help prevent visa abuse and abuse of the employee.

**Informal Recommendation 27:** Posts should also adhere to Department of State regulations requiring that childcare providers who apply for B1 visas to accompany their employers to the United States have a written contract and have been employed no less than six months with that employer.

Adjudicating officers are concerned that translators for visa interviews may be inaccurate.

**Informal Recommendation 28:** Consular sections should develop a list of officially approved translators (similar to an attorneys or doctors list). With the exception of family members, only those translators on the approved list should be permitted to participate in visa interviews.

Toronto conducts more than 10,000 visa interviews per year with applicants who only speak Mandarin Chinese.

**Informal Recommendation 29:** The large volume posts in Canada should contact the Bureau of Human Resources, Career Development and Assignments and request it to consider assigning them an officer with some Mandarin Chinese capacity.

Visas issued for the purpose of visiting a Canadian consulate for an immigration interview could be problematic.

**Informal Recommendation 30:** Fraud prevention units should develop contacts with the Canadian Border Services Agency to help avoid sending someone into the United States for an interview who would likely be refused permission to reenter Canada.

## RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

### Management

American and LE staff at Embassy Ottawa's constituent posts sometimes believe that they are not kept informed of developments during the decision making process.

**Informal Recommendation 31:** Embassy Ottawa's management section should provide a column on management issues for each constituent post's monthly newsletter and the mission's locally employed staff newsletter.

Consulate General Montreal's management officer position has been vacant for several months.

**Informal Recommendation 32:** Embassy Ottawa should provide a temporary management officer to Consulate General Montreal.

## HUMAN RESOURCES

There is still a significant backlog of new CAJE requests for classification.

**Informal Recommendation 33:** Embassy Ottawa should ensure that additional human resources staff become certified on the computer aided job evaluation system.

**Informal Recommendation 34:** Embassy Ottawa should request temporary duty assistance to address the backlog.

Voucher examiner staffs were classified by the CAJE system as a unit which did not include the complex work accomplished by some of the examiners.

**Informal Recommendation 35:** Embassy Ottawa should prepare positions descriptions for voucher examiners that fully describe the complex duties of the positions.

Consulate General Vancouver's local-hire American security investigator is regularly responsible for duties more complex than the position description indicates.

**Informal Recommendation 36:** Embassy Ottawa should ensure that the Consulate General Vancouver prepares a more accurate position description for the local American security investigator to be classified by the computer aided job evaluation system.

Consulate General Montreal's NIV unit staff perform the same function as a visa assistant but are graded as visa clerks.

**Informal Recommendation 37:** Embassy Ottawa should reclassify the positions in the nonimmigrant visa unit at Consulate General Montreal to verify the correct grade for duties performed.

As discussed in the consular affairs section of this report, Consulate General Montreal has reorganized its IV unit into two teams, which has changed the duties of some employees in the section.

**Informal Recommendation 38:** Embassy Ottawa should ensure that the immigrant visa unit supervisor revises the affected position descriptions and submit them to Embassy Ottawa for computer aided job evaluation review.

## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Staff in the consulates general have not been trained in the proper paperwork necessary to process a voucher.

**Informal Recommendation 39:** Embassy Ottawa should ensure that all consulate general staff who prepare paperwork for voucher processing take the voucher processing course offered on line through the Foreign Service Institute.

Staff in the consulates general do not always have the proper documentation required to process vouchers by the voucher examiners in the embassy.

**Informal Recommendation 40:** Embassy Ottawa should send senior voucher examiners to the consulates general to work with staff to establish efficient processing systems.

Consulate general management officers are not reviewing the paperwork sent to the embassy to process vouchers.

**Informal Recommendation 41:** Embassy Ottawa should change the work requirements for consulate general management officers to include review of paperwork for voucher processing.

Embassy Ottawa does not have a formal process for ensuring that annual reconciliations for LQA are completed.

**Informal Recommendation 42:** Embassy Ottawa should require mission employees to complete the annual living quarters allowance reconciliations.

## GENERAL SERVICES AND FACILITIES MAINTENANCE

Motor pool experienced three motor vehicle accidents involving marine security guards in a three-month period, two of which may have been affected by winter driv-

ing conditions. There is no specific ICASS bill for services provided by the embassy to USICAO to determine what the correct amount of reimbursement should be between WHA and the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs.

**Informal Recommendation 43:** Embassy Ottawa should review the use of International Cooperative Administrative Support Services to determine if there is need for a baseline transfer.

**Informal Recommendation 44:** Embassy Ottawa should arrange for the Marine security guards to attend a winter driving training course.

The other accident involving the Marine security guards occurred while maneuvering in the chancery parking area.

**Informal Recommendation 45:** Embassy Ottawa should ensure that as new Marine security guards rotate into the embassy, the motor pool supervisor ensures that they have training in maneuvering their vehicles in the confines of the chancery parking area.

In reviewing procurement and receiving, the OIG team found some confusion had arisen concerning procurement procedures.

**Informal Recommendation 46:** Embassy Ottawa should update and reissue the management instruction on purchasing goods and services for the U.S. government.

In Consulate General Vancouver, there is a problem with locating the exits on the 20th floor.

**Informal Recommendation 47:** Embassy Ottawa should ensure that the facility manager in Consulate General Vancouver, in coordination with building management, installs more exit lights to point to the exits.

In Vancouver there is also one unique fire door that is intended to assist but may in fact confuse due to too many warning signs.

**Informal Recommendation 48:** Embassy Ottawa should ensure that the facility manager designates simpler signage for the 20th floor fire exit door.

At the principal officer's residence in Halifax there are two structural circumstances that present a high risk of possible injury. The door to the only bathroom on the floor opens out directly in possible contact to where the door to the downstairs food preparation area (which is accessed by very steep stairs) opens. Also, the two-way

serving door into the kitchen, despite having a viewing window, opens directly to where the two lower doors to the oven open, presenting a major falling (and burning) threat.

**Informal Recommendation 49:** Embassy Ottawa should have its facility manager work closely with the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations to arrange funding for and completion of this long-standing project to alleviate two safety problems.

For Consulate General Vancouver and Consulate General Montreal, the impact of the reduction in ORE staff was apparent in the workload of the other management staff in general services.

**Informal Recommendation 50:** Embassy Ottawa should set up a one-day training course for all consulates general in time management to assist staff in coping with multiple job tasks.

The contract for landscaping and snow removal services for the Marine security guard quarters was allowed to lapse two years ago at the request of the then detachment commander.

**Informal Recommendation 51:** Embassy Ottawa should contract for landscaping and snow removal services for the quarters.

## INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND INFORMATION SECURITY

The majority of American information management employees at Mission Canada have not received formal training on Windows 2000/2003-based products.

**Informal Recommendation 52:** Embassy Ottawa should ensure that all mission information management employees receive the necessary training to operate and maintain the current generation of Windows 2000/2003-based systems.

Information management employees at Mission Canada do not have individual development plans, as required in 5 FAM 121.

**Informal Recommendation 53:** Embassy Ottawa should ensure that all American information management employees have current individual development plans.

There is limited need for ClassNet services at the smaller consulates general and the resources required to support the systems might not be justified.



## Community Liaison Office Coordinator Program

The embassy has experienced some resistance to the communication efforts of the CLO coordinators by the CBP preclearance group.

**Informal Recommendation 59:** Embassy Ottawa should work with the Customs and Border Patrol preclearance group to improve communication and efforts to assist newly-arriving employees.

Consulate General Toronto has a CLO coordinator who works 20 hours per week, which is insufficient to the task.

**Informal Recommendation 60:** Embassy Ottawa should ensure that Consulate General Toronto increase its community liaison office coordinator hours to 40 per week and explore an arrangement for two coordinators similar to the embassy arrangement.

Consulate General Vancouver does not have a CLO coordinator and would benefit from one on a part-time basis.

**Informal Recommendation 61:** Embassy Ottawa should ensure that Consulate General Vancouver establishes a part-time community liaison office coordinator position.

## MEDICAL SERVICES

When the regional psychiatrist visited Embassy Ottawa in January 2008, he did not visit any of the consulates general.

**Informal Recommendation 62:** Embassy Ottawa should request a regional psychiatrist visit for each of its constituent posts.

Embassy Ottawa and several of its consulates general have stocks of nerve agent antidote (Atrophine) and antibiotic (Cipro) that have passed their expiration date.

**Informal Recommendation 63:** Embassy Ottawa should contact the Department and arrange for the appropriate disposal and replacement of the mission's expired medications.

## EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY AND FEDERAL WOMEN'S PROGRAM

Consulate General Montreal staff is reluctant to complain or grieve about what is seen as unfair treatment in the workplace.

**Informal Recommendation 64:** Embassy Ottawa should develop a program for presentation at the consulates general on procedures, rights, and how to defuse tension in the workplace.

## MANAGEMENT CONTROLS

Not all the consulates general have an updated listing of designations for specific responsibilities.

**Informal Recommendation 65:** Embassy Ottawa should direct the consulates general to update designations listings.

Consulate General Vancouver's time and attendance for every section is manually checked and entered into the payroll system by the primary time keeper.

**Informal Recommendation 66:** Embassy Ottawa should direct Consulate General Vancouver to have all section time keepers prepare time and attendance electronically.

## PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Arrival Date</b>
Ambassador	David H. Wilkins	06/05
Deputy Chief of Mission	Terry A. Breese	08/07

### **Chiefs of Sections:**

Management	Timothy E. Roddy	07/04
Consular	Keith Powell II	08/04
Political	Scott D Bellard	09/07
Economic	Brian J. Mohler	08/05
Public Affairs	Linda C. Cheatham	10/07
Regional Security	Kevin F. Flanagan	08/06

### **Other Agencies:**

#### Department of Defense

Defense Attaché Office	Col. Joseph P. Breen	01/07
Special U.S. Liaison Office	Elizabeth Thompson	01/05
Defense Intelligence Agency		
Liaison-Ottawa	Steven A. Hecker	06/06
National Geospatial Intelligence Agency	Jeffry Redinger	07/07
U.S. Air Force-Canadian Forces Personnel	Hans M. Kimm	07/06
U.S. Army-Canadian Forces Personnel	Paula R. Smith	10/81
U.S. Navy-Canadian Forces Personnel	Terry R. Andrews	07/05

U.S. Northern Command	Christopher Liptak	06/03
U.S. Army International Technology Center	Col. Fernando Torrent	06/06
Defense Contract Management Agency	Brian L. Wenger	07/05
U.S. Air Force/Air Combat Command Contract Program Squadron	William S. Bergman	02/08
Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms	Mark W. Curtin	12/03
DHS/International Attaché	Theresa C. Brown	02/08
DHS/Customs and Border Patrol	Lisa L. Gilliam	09/07
DHS/CBP Preclearance	Beverly N. Leifer	02/05
DHS/Immigrations and Customs Enforcement	Thomas E. Blanchard	07/07
DHS/U.S. Secret Service	Andrew G. Orringer	05/06
DHS/Transportation Security Administration	Vacant	
Drug Enforcement Administration	Gerald E. Kaphing	08/07
Foreign Agricultural Service	Lisa M. Anderson	08/05
Foreign Commercial Service	Stephan Wasylko	07/07
Federal Bureau of Investigation	Gary D. Klein	12/06
Internal Revenue Service	Bruce R. Traina	11/05

**Consulates General:**

Calgary	Thomas K. Huffaker	08/06
Halifax	Harold D. Foster	07/06
Montreal	Mary B. Marshall	09/05
Quebec City	David R. Fetter	09/07
Toronto	John R. Nay	06/06
Vancouver	Lewis A. Lukens	08/05

## ABBREVIATIONS

ACS	American citizens services
APP	American presence post
ARSO-I	Assistant regional security officer - investigations
CA	Bureau of Consular Affairs
CAJE	Computer aided job evaluation
CBP	Customs and Border Patrol
CLO	Community liaison office
CRBA	Consular Report of Births Abroad
CSI	Container Security Initiative
DCM	Deputy chief of mission
Department	Department of State
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DVC	Digital video conference
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunity
ELO	Entry-level officer
ESTH	Environment, science and technology, and health
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization
ICASS	International Cooperative Administrative Support Services
IPR	Intellectual property rights
IR	Immediate relative
IV	Immigrant visa
J-1	Exchange visitor visa
KCC	Kentucky Consular Center
LE	Locally employed (staff)

LEBWOG	Law Enforcement and Border Working Group
LEWG	Law enforcement working group
LQA	Living quarters allowance
MSP	Mission Strategic Plan
NIV	Nonimmigrant visa
NORTHCOM	U.S. Northern Command
NSDD	National Security Decision Directive
OBO	Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations
ORE	Official residence expense
OIG	Office of Inspector General
PAO	Public affairs officer
RSO	Regional security officer
VPP	Virtual presence post
WHA	Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs

## BEST PRACTICES

### Best Practice: Inventory Control/Property Management

**Problem:** Maintaining a timely and accurate inventory of the personal property at the Ambassador and DCM residences is a painstaking and laborious exercise.

**Solution:** The embassy's warehouse supervisor and the storekeeper have developed a best practice for inventory control. Every piece of property at both residences has been digitally pictured along with its nonexpendable property application property number, so that both by record book and by computer any item can be identified and traced.

**Results:** It is now much easier to complete an inventory or spot check on individual items at either residence.

Contact: American Embassy, Supervisory General Services Officer, P.O. Box 866, Station B, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5T1 Canada, or Embassy of the United States, P.O. Box 5000, Ogdensburg, NY 13669-0430, telephone: (613) 688-5250, FAX: (613) 688-3091.

**Best Practice: Ecology Fair/Waste Management**

**Problem:** How to emphasize to the embassy community the cost savings of recycling and the benefits of using more efficient lighting (such as compact fluorescent lights).

**Solution:** Embassy Ottawa has made the “greening” of mission operations a priority, and it is included as a goal in the management affairs strategic plan. The conservation program began as a cost-saving measure several years ago and has blossomed into a mission-wide commitment. Recycling bins are readily available throughout the mission, including at consulates general, and their use is encouraged. In the embassy building, which receives generous amounts of natural light in its interior atrium, only one-half of the lights are turned on, with no apparent detriment.

In early March 2008, the general services and facilities maintenance sections sponsored an ecology fair in the embassy auditorium. The fair was the culmination of a major effort to track embassy-generated waste – in which the post actually measured the pounds of paper, plastic, and other recyclables that were thrown out unsorted and found that 39 per cent of the material sent to the landfill was potentially recyclable. Booths displayed graphically the break out of the “waste audit” and what could have been recycled. Other booths had examples of regular light bulbs and compact fluorescent light bulbs, which are 75 per cent more efficient, and the differences in brightness and energy usage. Again, graphs were used to portray how much in energy costs could be saved if the embassy buildings and employee residences were fitted with compact florescent light bulbs. (Mission Canada families’ savings could be as high as \$85 thousand.) Led by the Ambassador, many embassy employees attended the fair.

**Results:** The Embassy community is now better informed on the benefits of (and hopefully recruited into adopting) recycling and utilizing CFL lighting.

Contact: American Embassy, Facilities Manager, P.O. Box 866, Station B, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5T1 Canada, or Embassy of the United States, P.O. Box 5000, Ogdensburg, NY 13669-0430, telephone: (613) 688-5247, FAX: (613) 688-3035.

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