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

Report of Inspection

Embassy Port-au-Prince, Haiti

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KEY JUDGMENTS

- The Ambassador and deputy chief of mission (DCM) are a good team to lead all elements of the mission. Morale is generally good. Highly effective policy promotion closely adheres to key goals and objectives. In particular, the relationship the Ambassador has developed with Haiti's political leadership has enabled her to lobby assertively for reforms and respect for human rights.
- An innovative new \$20 million program, the Haiti Stabilization Initiative (HSI), made possible by Section 1207 funds from the Department of Defense, will target the population of Port-au-Prince's Cité Soleil slum in an effort to bring security and hope to a neglected area of the city.
- In 2008, all mission elements will move to a well-designed and spacious new chancery for which the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations deserves praise. Planning by mission components for the move and consolidation with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) mission on administrative support is just starting. Consolidating all mission elements on one new embassy compound (NEC), coupled with merging Department and USAID administrative services, should result in reduced staffing and cost savings, particularly in the local guard program.
- Reporting on political developments is high quality and well read by Washington policymakers and analysts. Staffing gaps in the economic section require reorganization to better cover reporting on trade and investment.
- Public diplomacy activities need to be expanded and coordinated with all agencies to publicize American policy and assistance programs.
- The consular section is well staffed and well led. Some internal controls on files and cashiering should be strengthened, and careful planning should be started for the move to the NEC.
- The management section is doing a good job. There is a marked improvement in administrative operations since the Office of Inspector General (OIG) inspection of 2000. The locally employed (LE) staff are proficient and professional.

CONTEXT



Haiti is the poorest country in the western hemisphere and one of the poorest countries in the world. The political agenda is dominated by crime, but the level of armed robberies, shootings, and kidnappings is down since the highs of 2005-06. The 7,000 person Haitian National Police (HNP) is poorly trained and equipped and does not have the trust of the Haitian people. The Haitian army was abolished in 1995. The UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) is in charge of po-

lice training and has made improvements. There are 50 contract U.S. police officers among the international force training the HNP. The goal is to vet and train 1,200 HNP officers a year until the force reaches a strength of 12,000 in 2012. The success of the program will depend on support in the United Nations, and a long-term commitment to extend MINUSTAH past its current mandate, which ends in September 2007.

The lack of public infrastructure affects Embassy Port-au-Prince operations and levies additional burdens on administrative support and security staff. While the post appreciates the attention from Washington, an unusually heavy flow of official visitors has put a strain on the embassy's human and material resources.

Despite two international interventions in the past 12 years, Embassy Port-au-Prince's security environment deteriorated due to increased political unrest, violent crime, and confrontations between pro- and antigovernment forces. The embassy has suspended normal operations four times since November 2000. It placed eligible family members on an authorized departure status from November 2000 until April 2001 and again in January 2004. The Department of State (Department) directed an ordered departure of all family members and nonessential embassy personnel in February 2004, when violent activity reignited in Cité Soleil, a section of Port-au-Prince. This status continued until July 2004, when the embassy began to return to more normal operations. An increase in random violence and an escalation of kidnappings for ransom triggered another authorized departure from October 2004 to February 2005. Since 2005, security conditions have steadily improved. The Ambassador consulted extensively with Washington and had the emergency action committee review its findings several times before she recommended the return of minor

family members. The emergency action committee voted unanimously in favor of returning minor family members to post, and the Under Secretary for Management approved the action, effective July 1, 2006.

Haitian President René Préval of the Lespwa (Hope) coalition was inaugurated as president on May 14, 2006, following his victory in the February 7, 2006 elections, organized with the assistance of the United Nations and the Organization of American States. International observers considered those elections to have been free, fair, and democratic.

The Préval government has the strong support of foreign governments and the multilateral agencies engaged in the country, as well as the goodwill, at least for the time being, of the majority of Haitians. The success of Mr. Préval's presidency will rest on its ability to provide employment, improve social infrastructure, and improve the security situation. Urgent action is needed to increase economic opportunities for marginalized groups, to disarm urban gangs, and to reform and strengthen the HNP. Strengthening the rule of law, specifically the judicial and penal systems to combat corruption and public mistrust of these institutions, will also be a prerequisite for the government's strategy of attracting private investment to foster economic growth.

The United States has been Haiti's largest donor since 1973. From FY 1995 to FY 2006, the United States contributed more than \$1.4 billion in assistance to Haiti. The President's budget request for FY 2007 was \$194 million. In FY 2006 the U.S. assessment for the MINUSTAH was \$128 million. In FY 2007 it is \$98 million. These figures represent 27 percent of the cost of the 9,000 UN peacekeepers in Haiti.

Haiti has qualified for debt relief under the International Monetary Fund/World Bank heavily indebted poor country initiative, prompting new pledges from multilaterals. Strategies for growth, consultation, and sustainable development have yet to be implemented. Fiscal projections envisage improved tax collection and targeted social spending. Slow aid disbursements have created tensions with donors. Growth has remained disappointing despite some acceleration. Inflation has eased. Balance of payments accounts have shown a steady rise in international reserves despite a widening trade deficit, owing to growing remittances. The passage of a U.S. law providing trade preferences (the Haitian Hemispheric Opportunity Through the Partnership Encouragement Act of 2006¹) known as "Hope" has improved prospects for the textile assembly sector.

¹ P.L. 109-432, as amended. Section 5002 of the Hope Act amended the Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act, 19 U.S.C. 2701-2707. The Hope Act is designed to promote private investment through textiles trade preferences for Haiti.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTION

Embassy Port-au-Prince is led by a dynamic career Ambassador and an experienced DCM. The Ambassador has demonstrated outstanding advocacy skills in Washington and in Haiti. In the year that this front office team has worked together, the embassy has begun the slow process of returning to normal operations following a two-year period defined by violence in the streets, staff drawdowns, and a crisis atmosphere in the community. Security has improved in Port-au-Prince, but the mission continues to monitor developments and adjust travel and other restrictions as appropriate. The Ambassador's leadership is evident in the good morale at post and generally good team work among many agencies. Interagency cooperation is impressive and will get even stronger among law enforcement agencies as full staffing is achieved in the narcotics affairs section. Communications and coordination will be made easier when mission elements come together under one roof in the NEC in the spring of 2008.

Stabilizing Haiti and promoting economic growth toward self-sufficiency are U.S. policy goals that are well defined in the Mission Strategic Plan (MSP). The Ambassador promotes the plan and refers to its key elements in her meetings in Port-au-Prince and in Washington. The post's political reporting and analysis is effective and highly regarded. The Ambassador and DCM have daily conversations with their contacts throughout the Washington bureaucracy, and they are frequent visitors in Washington and Miami and make the rounds of other agencies. The Ambassador is equally adept at keeping U.S. policy in motion in Haiti and has ready access to the President of Haiti and to the Prime Minister. She encourages and coordinates regular contacts between country team members and Haitian officials up to and including ministers. America's message is being delivered, and its leadership in democracy and governance contributed to an environment in which free and fair elections could be held in Haiti in 2006 and 2007.

The United States is Haiti's largest bilateral aid donor. As such, coordination with other donor nations is important and is a policy objective in the MSP. That coordination is being done through regular donor conferences, meetings with the UN Secretary General's Special Representative in Haiti, with the Ambassadors of principal donor countries, and with international financial institutions in Port-au-Prince and Washington. There is less effective oversight and coordination in Haiti with some international nongovernmental organizations, particularly some with grants signed in Washington. As the embassy becomes aware of these grants, it will help to

monitor performance and give periodic status reports to the appropriate office in the Department. An innovative new \$20 million program, the Haiti Stabilization Initiative (HSI), made possible by Section 1207 funds from the Department of Defense, will target the population of Port-au-Prince's Cité Soleil slum in an effort to bring hope and security to a neglected area of the city.² The newly established HSI office has four American positions. Only two are filled, and unless the program is expanded well beyond Cité Soleil and a \$20 million budget, there is no need for the two vacant HSI positions. The Hope legislation offers an important incentive for Haiti's small industrial sector. The embassy's active diplomacy, in support of the act and its close working relationship with the UN mission in Haiti and with representatives of Haiti's friends in the hemisphere, is helping to maintain the international community's engagement in and commitment to Haiti.

Recommendation 1: Embassy Port-au-Prince, in coordination with the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs and the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization, should abolish two American positions in the Haiti Stabilization Initiative office in Port-au-Prince. (Action: Embassy Port-au-Prince, in coordination with WHA and S/CRS)

U.S. assistance programs in Cité Soleil are being implemented by USAID in coordination with MINUSTAH. At the time of the inspection, two positions established in Haiti under HSI to support and coordinate U.S. programs in Cité Soleil were filled by temporary duty (TDY) personnel who were still being briefed and had not yet become fully operational. The embassy did not raise specific issues about support for the new HSI positions, but upon return to Washington the OIG team was told by the Bureau of Diplomatic Security (DS) that there was a significant shortfall in resources to provide the security required by the two HSI officers in Port-au-Prince. These resources are related to the escort of the officers on each and every trip into Cité Soleil. The OIG team raised the issue of this shortfall with the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization, who said he would look into the matter and see if his office could assist with funds for the security upgrades necessary to support the new HSI positions in Haiti. DS has already helped the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization obtain some resources for this purpose. There is adequate space in the NEC for the new HSI positions.

² Section 1207, Public Law 109-163, of the FY 2006 Defense Authorization Act. These funds are intended to integrate security and development and strengthen the Haitian government presence in Cité Soleil. The Haitian Stabilization Initiative is a concrete example of the embracement of the rule of law, reassertion of Haitian government authority, and the reestablishment of a Haitian government presence in an area, Cité Soleil, rife with criminal gangs and gang activity.

As stated above, the embassy's political reporting and analysis is excellent. Economic and commercial reporting, though good, is not as thorough. To meet the acknowledged need for reporting on the private sector and potential new investments, the DCM is considering creating a joint political/economic section and redistributing reporting assignments to cover both portfolios. For her part, the Ambassador takes every opportunity to encourage the Haitian President to take the steps necessary for an improved, more transparent legal, commercial, and investment climate. The World Bank's International Finance Corporation is beginning to offer loans for businesses in Haiti, and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation is ready to insure investors in America interested in Haiti.³ U.S. and Haitian investors are taking another look at Haiti, and the embassy will do more reporting in this area.

The Ambassador places a high priority on public diplomacy to provide a better understanding of U.S. policies and maintain public support for American engagement in Haiti, one of six country-specific goals in the MSP. An embassy-produced video of the Ambassador's talk on HSI delivered in Cité Soleil in May 2007 quickly made the rounds of radio and television stations.

The public affairs section (PAS) is fully staffed with in-cone officers and an at-grade public affairs officer (PAO) for the first time in several years. There is an opportunity now to increase publicity for the \$182 million assistance program in Haiti. The front office can play a greater role in coordinating embassy communications efforts. To that end, the Ambassador has given her strong support to a USAID proposal to hire a public relations firm that would have a mission-wide scope.

Security is crucial to the success of U.S. policy in Haiti. Without it, the best assistance programs will fail and democracy could collapse. The United States contributes 27 percent of the budget for the MINUSTAH, which has restored a modicum of order in Port-au-Prince. This force is extraordinary in that it is led by Brazil and includes other South American and Central American troops working together to carry out a peacekeeping mission in the Western Hemisphere. Part of the \$93 million U.S. assessment for MINUSTAH in FY 2007 goes for training the HNP. Haiti no longer has an army. This puts the HNP in charge of border security, maritime security, and law enforcement in general. With only 7,000 police officers on duty and as many as 30 percent of those likely to be dismissed for corruption or human rights violations, security in the country will depend on the United Nations for several years to come. The United Nations estimates that it will require 12,000

³ There is one caveat. The Overseas Private Investment Corporation and USAID have policy provisions that honor the spirit of the Lautenberg Amendment, which requires that consideration be given to the impact on jobs in the United States.

vetted, trained, and equipped HNP officers to replace MINUSTAH. It will take at least five years to achieve that goal, a schedule that must be taken into account in planning long-term U.S. assistance to Haiti. The United States helps staff MINUSTAH with 50 contract American police officers, several of Haitian decent. There may be a need for more with all the attendant costs. If the UN Security Council should fail to renew the mandate of the Stabilization Mission in Haiti before 2012, when it is expected that sufficient HNP will be are trained and equipped to replace MINUSTAH forces, stability and security in Haiti may, by all accounts, collapse. In spite of all the lobbying by nations who support the UN mission in Haiti, some thought should be given to what will be done unilaterally should MINUSTAH be withdrawn prematurely.

Recommendation 2: Embassy Port-au-Prince should prepare a series of think pieces on the prospects for U.S. policy in Haiti with and without a UN commitment at current levels, and an analysis of where Haiti is today versus where the United States wants it to be in the long term with an estimate of the resources needed to realize the desired outcomes. (Action: Embassy Port-au-Prince)

There are 17 entry-level officers (ELOs) assigned to Embassy Port-au-Prince. Thirteen are at post, with seven assigned in the consular section. Morale among the ELOs is generally good. They all bid Haiti high and are doing an excellent job wherever they are assigned. Their work discipline is good in spite of the critical crime environment in which they live and work, but they do not feel they are getting the mentoring they need. The Ambassador includes the ELOs in social events, and the DCM invites them to his home, but they still feel left out. They want to hear more about U.S. policy from the Ambassador, and they want to understand how things work in a large mission. In defense of post managers, they have been busy getting the embassy back on its feet after severe drawdowns and lengthy staffing gaps. Carrying out U.S. policy in Haiti comes first, and the Ambassador and DCM have done that extremely well. Once they catch their breath, however, it would be appropriate to reach out again to the ELOs to help them understand where they fit in. Because the Ambassador and DCM are experienced officers with good communications and interpersonal skills, this issue will be addressed as the mission returns to a greater degree of normalcy. Therefore, no formal recommendation is being made.

POLICY AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Policy and program implementation in Haiti is an example of transformational diplomacy undertaking the job of building a nation that had become a failed state. As such, officers are necessarily operational in their activities but have still managed to do an excellent job, overall, of providing the traditional reporting that Washington requires. This hard-to-fill post is staffed with a team of excellent senior officers, some mid-level officers in stretch assignments, and talented ELOs, supplemented by highly qualified LE staff. The mission is getting back to normal, and it has much work ahead in tending to issues that were temporarily deferred due to previous draw-downs.

POLITICAL AFFAIRS

A large and well-led political section focuses on analytical reporting and on managing an active bilateral dialogue. Despite a heavy load of visitors, it has ambitions to do more traveling outside Port-au-Prince and to make the best use of three ELO positions. Reporting on the inner circles of government is difficult, but the embassy has overcome this by unusually close coordination among the political section, the Ambassador, and other sections and agencies at post who are encouraged to have contacts up to and including ministers. Washington readers praised the range and volume of the embassy's reporting.

Reporting and Analysis

The section is lead by an officer in a two-grade stretch. The section turns out an impressive volume of high-quality reporting closely targeted to Washington priorities. To ensure that it reaches end users in all agencies, the political section sends important reports by cable as formal messages of record, using e-mail largely for its operational needs. Reporting is timely, with at least a spot report submitted immediately on key developments. It is particularly strong in analyzing and predicting Haitian views on issues of concern to the United States. Reporting on security issues is coordinated through the Law Enforcement Working Group which includes the Defense attaché office and other elements of the mission.

Travel is difficult in Haiti because of poor roads and uncertain security. The Ambassador does travel and takes a reporting officer with her. The section has drafted a series of “postcard from” cables, which are appropriate to the situation in Haiti and the level of interest in Washington. The section has also drafted rumor control messages, which, while unusual, help Washington readers sift fact from fancy in the Haitian press and wire services.

Operations and Advocacy

The section is increasingly operational. It handles a heavy workload of demarches well, adding significant value through its analysis of Haitian government responses. At the same time, it devotes a large and growing percentage of its time to supporting official visitors. Some officers assigned to support these visits spend too much time reinventing what should be standardized procedures. The OIG team informally recommended that the mission revise its visitor checklists to include more information on what needs to be done and how to do it. Reporting on human rights is timely and well written.

The political section has three ELO positions and two mid-level positions. With an FS-03 officer in charge and one other mid-level officer in the section, mentoring is lacking. The ELOs are doing a good job, but they need more time with the section head to sharpen their skills. The OIG team provided counseling on this.

ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL AFFAIRS

The economic/commercial section has a record of good reporting in quantity and quality, but Washington end users have expressed a desire to see additional reporting relating to future private sector investment. The section was, and continues to be, busy with the Hope Act as it developed. The nature of that focus has moved from supporting the Department’s efforts to build a case for the legislation, to working with the government of Haiti in order to certify Haiti. The current focus is on working with the government of Haiti and the private sector on Hope implementation. Haiti’s largest export is textiles. Formal sector unemployment is in the 80 percent range, and a revival of the textile export industry carries the promise of restoring up to 30,000 of the 70,000 jobs in that sector lost in part to UN sanctions in the early 1990s. Approximately 15,000 jobs remain in the sector including approximately 1,200 new jobs that have been the first positive developments from Hope textile preferences.

There has been good coordination among Embassy Port-au-Prince economic officers, the Haiti Desk, and Haitian officials to get Haiti all of its certifications. On June 21, 2007, the rules and regulations for Hope Act implementation will be published. Hope-related activities, advocacy, assisting in commercial disputes, mandated reporting, and reporting in support of the MSP have fully taxed the capacity of the small section preventing it from spending as much time out of the office as is otherwise desired. This has been exacerbated by staffing gaps that will likely worsen.

Staffing Gap Crisis

When fully staffed, the economic/commercial section has two officers, two LE staff, and an office management specialist. Shortly after the arrival of the OIG team the economic/commercial counselor departed post permanently, retiring from the Foreign Service a year ahead of the completion of his tour. The newly tenured remaining officer in the section plans to convert to the Civil Service and depart post permanently in September 2007, also one year before her tour is scheduled to be completed. The section may be without an officer in July 2007 and have only one economic cone rotational ELO as acting section chief in late September 2007. The replacement for the section chief has already been paneled by the Department, but the officer is not scheduled to arrive at post for another year. The front office can seek to provide experienced leadership for the section with a rehired Foreign Service annuitant, at considerable post expense, or combine the political and economic/commercial sections.

Recommendation 3: Embassy Port-au-Prince should either arrange for coverage of the economic section or combine the political and economic sections to deal with the early departure of the two officers in the economic/commercial section. (Action: Embassy Port-au-Prince)

Broadening Coverage

The economic/commercial section does little reporting on the intentions of Haitian investors including investors from the Haitian-American Diaspora. There is no reporting plan, and the MSP does not call for monitoring and reporting on the activities of job-creating investors. If Haiti is to achieve stability, and a self-sustaining economy that can replace the largess of international donors, it must revive locally generated employment. Expectations for results from the Hope legislation are high.

However, without investor confidence and the determination of Haitian and Haitian-Americans to risk capital in Haiti, the country must continue to depend on the donor community. Also, as some members of Congress and the Haitian government appeal for further broadening of provisions in the Caribbean Basin initiative and the Hope Act, those appeals and decisions related to them will need to be informed by embassy reporting on the intentions of investors to include tracking relevant indicators of actual investor actions.

Although the mission has contacts with potential Haitian and Haitian-American investors it has not reported on their investment intentions or tracked investor confidence. The limited resources of the economic/commercial section have been applied to other worthy projects. The section responds to mandated reporting requirements, such as developing the Country Commercial Guide and ad hoc needs. Section staff also participates in the embassy task force in support of Hope implementation and attempt to report with an eye on priorities in the MSP. The Department's Strategic Plan Fiscal Years 2007 – 2012 sets Strategic Goal 4 as Promoting Economic Growth and Prosperity. Likewise, the MSP Goal Paper 2 is focused on Economic Growth and Development.

Recommendation 4: Embassy Port-au-Prince should prepare an immediate report on investor intentions and activities and implement a plan for a series of follow-up reports on the subject. (Action: Embassy Port-au-Prince)

PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

There are three officers and 12 LE staff in the PAS with a total budget of \$676,416, over half of which is available for discretionary programming. PAS programs were negatively impacted by the breakdown in civil order in Haiti in 2005 and post drawdowns. At times PAS has operated with only ELOs, with out-of-cone officers, or with only one officer. For four years, the post did not have a cultural affairs officer for lack of bidders. A new PAO with extensive public diplomacy experience is now in place. The Information Resources Center (IRC) is now under the PAO's direct supervision, and the new IRC director has begun to plan programs involving Haitian libraries and institutions. The PAS is now fully staffed and doing things such as holding training workshops for local journalists. With a move to a NEC in 2008, PAS will be less accessible, but with its new leadership, a new facility, and improved stability in Haitian society, the future looks hopeful for PAS programs.

Outreach Constrained by Security Concerns

PAS has had difficulty doing outreach to marginalized communities. However, with improvement in the security environment, PAS has started to do more outreach including to areas previously considered no-go zones in the Port-au-Prince area.

Public Diplomacy Coordination and Marketing

Public diplomacy, as conducted by the mission, is an interagency activity. It requires coordination, collaboration, and attention to detail to be successful. There have been some problems coordinating public diplomacy events between USAID and PAS, but that is improving.

There is inconsistent coverage of the full range of U.S. assistance programs in Haiti. During the inspection, an OIG inspector met with board members of the local American Chamber of Commerce. The board was critical of the embassy's record in informing the Haitian public of the many good things the United States is doing, especially in communicating to the lower classes that make up the bulk of the country's population. The board also highlighted what the OIG team had observed concerning identifying U.S. assistance. USAID is attempting to address this issue by requiring an identification provision in all future contracts with its nongovernmental organization partners.

USAID public diplomacy needs are much greater than the capacity of PAS. USAID has its own LE public affairs officer, who has an excellent working level relationship with PAS. USAID is also seeking to contract with a public relations firm. Coordinating outreach when the Ambassador and USAID are both involved is complicated when Haitian officials wait until the last moment to set the schedule. Notification with little advance causes a flurry of stressful activity by USAID, the front office, the regional security office, and PAS. USAID and the embassy have different computer systems, which is a hindrance to good communications. USAID cannot see embassy reporting cables or the Ambassador's schedule, which would facilitate planning and coordination.

The bottom line is that the United States is missing opportunities to receive adequate credit for the largess of the American people toward Haiti, and PAS-USAID relations in this area could be improved. There is a willingness to work together. There is the risk that USAID could "go it alone" as it increases its own capacity through the hiring of a public relations firm. Although the scope of work for the

public relations firm is to be mission-wide and include PAS input, PAS was not involved in the drafting of the initial proposal. No doubt, some problems will be ameliorated by colocation in the NEC.

Recommendation 5: Embassy Port-au-Prince should establish a public diplomacy working group to better coordinate planned events and a strategy for improving public awareness of U.S. contributions to Haiti. (Action: Embassy Port-au-Prince)

Polling

The weakness in coordination of strategic communication at post extends to polling. The MSP calls for PAS to do polling, but PAS has neither requested polling by the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Office of Public Opinion Research, nor does it contribute any input into polling undertaken by USAID. The USAID polling is conducted semiannually by the Gallop polling organization at the direction of the Washington-based interagency Policy Coordinating Committee headed by the Department's Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs.

Strategic communication is not fully coordinated at post. Tracking public opinion would provide the mission with information that would be helpful in crafting public diplomacy programs.

Recommendation 6: Embassy Port-au-Prince should establish a mechanism for closer coordination of the public affairs section with other agencies at post on polling and, if necessary, seek supplementary polling through the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Office of Opinion Research. (Action: Embassy Port-au-Prince, in coordination with INR)

American Corners

There are eight principal cities in Haiti, but Port-au-Prince has one-third of the country's population in a sprawling hilly metropolitan area of several municipalities and slums like Cité Soleil. None of these cities has an American Corner or a binational center. The American Corner is a public diplomacy best practice. Without

American Corners the post is foregoing a useful tool for outreach and for promoting the MSP goal of publicizing American values. There are two immediate possibilities for placing American Corners: the Haitian National Library system and nongovernmental organizations.

Recommendation 7: Embassy Port-au-Prince, in coordination with the Bureau of International Information Programs, should determine the locations and institutions that would best serve the mission's interests for inaugurating American Corners in Haiti and initiate discussions with them. (Action: Embassy Port-au-Prince, in coordination with IIP)

In-House Studio

Haiti has 30 local television stations and over 300 radio stations. It is fairly easy to place product on them. PAS utilizes the internal aviation network to distribute DVDs and audio CDs throughout Haiti. PAS issued grants for two documentaries that were well received and had good placement success. PAS had great success placing material when it contracted with videographers to cover events highlighted by the Ambassador's participation or issued a grant for the production of a Creole language dramatic series for radio in support of Black History Month.

The current PAS LE staff includes a former cable television anchor. The opening of the LE staff audiovisual position, vacant at the time of the inspection, provides an opportunity to hire someone with the skills to be an audiovisual engineer and producer. This, plus training for some PAS staff in camera work and editing, would provide the skills necessary to support a more active in-house studio. The current studio in PAS lacks digital motion picture cameras, special lighting, digital editing equipment, and software. The space in the NEC appears to be adequate for an expanded studio, and the PAS budget can fund such an initiative with some additional support from the Department.

The effective use of an in-house production studio at Embassy Port-au-Prince would help air regular thematic messages by the Ambassador and promote more awareness of U.S. programs in Haiti. It could be a useful tool in the English language program as well. The studio could produce a series in coordination with the consular section to deal with myths and help applicants arrive better prepared for their interviews. The Ambassador cannot personally attend every program launch by agencies at post. Those she does not attend could still be filmed and a studio piece with the Ambassador added for distribution to television and radio stations.

Recommendation 8: Embassy Port-au-Prince, in coordination with the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, should develop and implement a plan to train staff to use equipment and editing software so as to take full advantage of an in-house production studio to be fitted out in the new embassy compound. (Action: Embassy Port-au-Prince, in coordination with WHA)

Making Use of Digital Videoconferencing a Virtual Speakers Program

The PAS does not conduct digital videoconferences (DVC). Until a week prior to the inspection, there was no DVC equipment at post. Although equipment has arrived, it is not installed. Inadequate bandwidth is currently an issue, but this will be resolved once operations are consolidated in the NEC. DVCs are a proven public diplomacy tool. It would be especially useful in Haiti where security concerns limit travel and programming, and have severely limited the speaker program and the placement of Fulbright fellows in-country.

Without a speakers program and without using DVCs, the embassy has been missing opportunities to reach some target groups in support of MSP goals. The MSP calls for an active speakers program, and the PAO is working on it. There is consideration being given to renewal of the American Fulbright program. Until then, the use of DVCs can enable the post to mount a virtual speakers program.

Recommendation 9: Embassy Port-au-Prince should install digital videoconferencing equipment either in the current public affairs office immediately, or in the new embassy compound when it is ready in 2008, and then develop a plan to use the technology in support of Mission Strategic Plan goals. (Action: Embassy Port-au-Prince)

Consolidating and Upgrading Contact Databases

The PAS has two different contact lists on different databases. The embassy political and protocol sections also have their own contact databases. There has been a lack of coordination. Some robust and proven databases exist and are worthy of consideration for an upgrade and consolidation of contact and distribution databases.

Recommendation 10: Embassy Port-au-Prince should use a single contact and distribution database for its public affairs section and possibly also including the front office, protocol unit, and other substantive sections of the embassy. (Action: Embassy Port-au-Prince.)

Information Resources Center

The IRC receives six to 10 visitors a day by appointment. It organizes programs for Haitian Fulbrighters and other former exchange participants and distributes IIP electronic journals and publications in French. In its current location, the IRC enjoys relatively easy public access and makes three DIN computers available for users, by appointment. After relocation to the NEC, the IRC will have twice that number, but access to the IRC in the NEC will necessarily be more restricted. The IRC is the most reliable educational advising center in Haiti and maintains a collection of resources from the Regional Educational Advising Counselor in Mexico City.

Visitor Programs

The International Visitors Leadership Program for Haiti has \$171,500 to fund 22 visitors in FY 2007. All candidates are vetted for possible records of human rights abuses.

Voice of America and Broadcast Media

The VOA produces a Creole language news program and hosts a Creole website. The PAS, in accordance with the Department's memorandum of understanding with the Broadcasting Board of Governors, provides some support to VOA affiliates. The PAS also assists VOA stringers.⁴

NARCOTIC AFFAIRS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

Police training is a major policy goal. There is no longer a Haitian army. U.S. law enforcement agencies, including the Drug Enforcement Administration, the U.S. Coast Guard, and a narcotics affairs section funded by the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs provide training and equipment to the HNP.

⁴ Stringers are local reporters paid by the story or actuality (sound bite) used.

Interagency cooperation in this area is collaborative but could be better coordinated. For example, visits have not been coordinated as well as they might, and country clearances are not always processed in a routine fashion. A law enforcement working group chaired by the DCM meets regularly. Its role is to share information, coordinate operations, and ensure that laws, regulations, and policies governing law enforcement activities in Haiti are enforced.

The mission does not have standard procedures for carrying out Leahy vetting requirements (06 State 116138) to ensure that Haitians who are to receive U.S. government-funded training or equipment are free of human rights abuses. At present, the narcotics affairs section does most of the vetting for HNP trainees, but other sections and law enforcement agencies provide training and equipment to the various specialized elements of the HNP as well. The Haitian Coast Guard is part of the HNP but deals most directly with the U.S. Coast Guard. Closer coordination of vetting is a task for the law enforcement working group.

Recommendation 11: Embassy Port-au-Prince should require that Department guidelines for Leahy vetting are applied by all U.S. government agencies that provide training or equipment to Haitian nationals. (Action: Embassy Port-au-Prince)

The UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti has taken over the responsibility of monitoring all weapons in the possession of the HNP. The database is maintained by a Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs American contract employee seconded to MINUSTAH. The database has been in existence for several years and is an important tool in law enforcement in Haiti. The embassy's narcotics affairs section monitors the database and will ensure that it remains available to the U.S. government.

CONSULAR AFFAIRS

Port-au-Prince's medium-to-large consular section is well led, productive, and, in general, enjoys good officer morale. Consular staff point to the consul general's leadership and confidence in his managers as keys to the section's resurgence since late 2006. The consul general provides strong, consistent leadership, employing a hands-off approach with his unit managers, who in turn feel empowered and confident to direct the work of their respective units and staffs. The recent addition of

a full-time fraud prevention manager and a near full complement of officers since November 2006 enable the section to provide the full range of consular services, reduce backlogs, and otherwise return to a semblance of normalcy. However, despite the section's best efforts, immigrant visa (IV) and nonimmigrant visa (NIV) backlogs continue to burden and handicap consular operations. While the consular section has made impressive strides on visa processing and American citizens services (ACS) in the past six months, certain functions/safe guards, such as files and fees security, consular outreach, and officer training/orientation are lacking or are not fully compliant with regulations, consular management guidelines, and consular standard operating procedures.

The quality of adjudications and service to the public is excellent. The NIV backlogs will remain at least until the section moves into the NEC and is able to parlay the greater number of windows and improved client flow into greater NIV productivity. Endemic fraud places a heavy burden on all consular functions. The recent addition of a dedicated, mid-level fraud prevention manager fills a critical consular need. Consular staff work in overcrowded and otherwise inadequate facilities. The consular annex is located a mile and a half from the chancery, which takes 15 minutes to drive. Travel between the consulate and the chancery must be in an armored vehicle. The NEC should bring many benefits including improved consular efficiency, better customer service, and needed integration of consular staff, particularly ELOs, with the rest of the mission.

Consular Management

The consul general departed two days after the completion of the OIG inspection. The acting deputy, who doubled as the IV chief, departed May 6, 2007. The embassy requested two TDY officers for the summer. The Bureau of Consular Affairs, Executive Office, indicates that they will provide TDY assistance. In order for the consular section to maintain its momentum towards normalcy, staffing gaps must be kept to an absolute minimum, and managerial slots must be filled with proven managers. The attrition rate among LE staff is high, which further hampers consular efficiency. Consular LE staff who can, leave to immigrate, principally to Canada.

All embassy components are scheduled to move into the new chancery in March, 2008. The section has not started the formal planning process to identify where functions and staff will be located and how service windows will be assigned. Internal working patterns and client flow have not been defined, and staff have not been trained on Q-Matic.⁵ The Department of Homeland Security's Citizenship and

⁵ Q-Matic is the brand name of a client flow and control system. A significant number of consular sections employ this system.

Immigration component, which will be colocated with the consular section, should participate in the planning for the move. Without a detailed comparison of current and NEC consular spaces, the embassy will not know best how to organize consular space. ACS and the Citizenship and Immigration Service currently see a combined average of 220 clients per day, a volume the small waiting area and five windows in the NEC may not be adequate to service.

Recommendation 12: Embassy Port-au-Prince should plan the move of the consular section and the Citizenship and Immigration Component into the new chancery to include where to locate the various functions, the assignment of windows, the use of Q-Matic, and client flow. (Action: Embassy Port-au-Prince)

Consular managers, including the consul general, have made little use of outreach opportunities to disseminate information on consular issues. Use of radio, a popular local medium, to educate/inform NIV, IV, and ACS clients on procedures, do's and don'ts, and other topics, has the potential to reduce the number of time-consuming administrative denials under Section 221(g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act. The consular section is blessed with an exceptional group of ELOs. The seven ELOs currently in the section are productive and motivated, but their ability to reach full proficiency was delayed by the lack of an orientation/training program when they arrived at post. Consular standard operating procedure 73 addresses consular training for newcomers.

Recommendation 13: Embassy Port-au-Prince should develop and implement a plan to reach out to the community via radio, print media, and speaking opportunities by entry-level officers and others, to educate private Americans and Haitians about the full complement of consular issues. (Action: Embassy Port-au-Prince)

Recommendation 14: Embassy Port-au-Prince should develop and implement a formally structured program of consular training and orientation. (Action: Embassy Port-au-Prince)

The section's bank-based NIV appointment system works reasonably well, however, the section might benefit further from exploring the visa office's free system for NIV clients, which is more flexible and responsive than the system currently in use.

As previously noted, the consular annex is overcrowded, inefficient, (b) (2)
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Immigrant Visas

There was a backlog of at least 20,000 documentarily qualified applicants in the summer of 2006. That number has been reduced to approximately 6,000. The IV process is slowed by fraud and poor preparation on the part of applicants. This results in repeated Section 221(g) of Immigration and Nationality Act denials. IVs should be issued to every applicant that comes into the consular section for his or

rely less on documents than in the past, which speeds up the interview process. The fraud prevention manager has undertaken a couple of validation studies on special groups, such as embassy security personnel.

Undocumented Economic Migrants

There are no refugees in Haiti. There is the desire on the part of many to depart Haiti for greener pastures, primarily the United States; however, the impetus is essentially economic. Currently, the U.S. Coast Guard is the entity with primary responsibility for guarding the flow of migrants to the United States. The embassy's prime concern with respect to migrants is safety. Given the risks that the long sea voyage entails, the embassy, the government of Haiti, and the U.S. Coast Guard discourage illegal migration, support antitrafficking, migrant protection, and reintegration programs.

Federal Benefits

Two ACS LE staff share federal benefit unit duties. Both are trained in federal benefit unit processes and procedures. Port-au-Prince's federal benefit unit workload is minimal, because 96 percent of beneficiaries employ direct-deposit, but fraud is a serious concern.

Fraud Prevention

The addition of the fraud prevention manager met a critical consular need. In addition to the fraud prevention manager, there are four LE staff antifraud positions. Fraud prevention staff is experienced, knowledgeable, and effective at getting documents out of registries and courts that are dysfunctional due to disarray and corruption.

American Citizens Services

The ACS unit is temporarily led by a newly tenured officer. Energetic and self-assured, the acting chief demonstrates a sophisticated grasp of ACS work and deals well with subordinates. ACS staff is knowledgeable and reasonably efficient; however, productivity is severely hampered by inadequate and inefficient space. With the move to the NEC in March 2008, extra service windows will increase the unit's efficiency and ability to employ more resources to meet surges in demand. The unit sees all comers on a first-come first-served basis, which leaves staff at the mercy of unexpected demand surges. Receiving nonemergency clients on an appointment ba-

sis, if only for such labor intensive services as consular reports of birth of an American citizen abroad, would result in better services and more manageable work flows. The OIG team made an informal recommendation to address this issue.

The unit has expertly managed numerous incidents of violence against American citizens. This includes over 100 kidnappings in the past two years. The ACS chief conceptualized and implemented an effective protocol for dealing with kidnappings.⁷ ACS coordinates with the Haitian police antikidnapping unit, the Federal Bureau of Investigations, and the UN civilian police. Communication and cooperation are excellent. The ACS unit convenes wardens twice a year for talks by the Ambassador, the consul general, the regional security officer, and guest speakers. The extent of the Ambassador's involvement with, and support for, the wardens is extraordinary and conveys an appropriate sense of importance to the warden system. ACS staff communicates with wardens via e-mail and phone, which could be disrupted in an emergency. Guidance for wardens on assembly points, for example, is not included in the mission's emergency action plan. The OIG team made an informal recommendation on this.

Citizenship services in Port-au-Prince are far more labor intensive than at the average post. A high percentage of citizenship cases involve fraud.

ACS is particularly supportive of imprisoned Americans. Detention facilities in Haiti are degrading and unhealthful. The judicial system barely works. ACS staff visits prisoners every month, more often if they are ill. The consul general diligently works his senior contacts to obtain the release of infirm prisoners on humanitarian grounds.

Avian Influenza

No cases of avian influenza have been identified in birds or humans. USAID's agriculture unit administers a grant to the government of Haiti's agricultural department to monitor and educate the public about the disease. The post does not have a contingency plan in case of an avian influenza outbreak. The OIG team counseled consular management to pursue this issue with the mission's technical experts on avian influenza.

⁷ FBI statistics indicate that 59 American citizens were kidnapped in Haiti in 2006. Haitian kidnappers seek large ransoms with the promise of a victim's release. Despite the payment of 48 ransoms, FBI statistics indicate that one American kidnap victim was murdered, four were released, two escaped, and three were rescued. The fate of the remaining victims is unknown due to difficulties in obtaining information on kidnapped persons in Haiti.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

| Agency | U.S. Direct-Hire Staff | U.S. Local-Hire Staff | Foreign National Staff | Total Staff | Total Funding (FY 2007) |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| State – D&CP | 44 | 3 | 59 | 106 | \$3,723,200 |
| State – ICASS | 5 | 4 | 200 | 209 | \$4,732,600 |
| State – Public Diplomacy | 3 | | 12 | 15 | \$676,416 |
| State – International Narcotics and Law Enforcement | 1 | 2** | 3 | 6 | \$378,000 |
| State – Diplomatic Security | 5 | | 474 | 479 | \$3,385,703 |
| State – Marine Security Guard | 6 | | 3 | 9 | \$186,160 |
| State – Representation | | | | | \$35,700 |
| State – OBO | 3* | 2** | 12 | 17 | \$3,453,471 |
| Defense Attaché Office | 4 | | 1 | 5 | \$237,185 |
| Office of Defense Cooperation (MLO) | 3 | | 3 | 6 | \$547,205 |
| Foreign Agricultural Service | 1 | | 10 | 11 | \$579,099 |
| Drug Enforcement Administration | 6 | 1** | | 7 | *** |
| Department of Homeland Security | 1 | | 9 | 10 | \$279,660 |

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|------------|---------------------|
| Centers for Disease Control | 2 | 2** | 34 | 38 | \$2,573,100 |
| Open Source Center | | | 2 | 2 | *** |
| U.S. Coast Guard | 1 | | | 1 | \$85,000 |
| Totals | 85 | 14 | 822 | 921 | \$20,872,499 |

*Embassy facility manager included

**U.S. personal services contractors

***Budget figures not available to embassy financial management section

Living conditions in Port-au-Prince have changed very little since the previous inspection in 2000.⁸ If anything, some aspects are worse. Kidnappings and killings have touched the embassy family, the traffic is dense and dangerous, public utilities do not function, and there are few opportunities for recreation and relaxation. Embassy Port-au-Prince has experienced four drawdowns since 2004. The most recent ended in July 2006, with the decision by the Department to allow family members to return to post. Personnel shortfalls, a deteriorating infrastructure, and a difficult security environment pose significant challenges to normalizing operations, yet administrative services have improved across the board. The current management team is almost fully staffed. The assistant general services officer position is vacant. A human resources officer from the Florida Regional Center in Fort Lauderdale is a member of the management staff and visits post for one week every two months. Embassy Port-au-Prince management positions are historically hard to fill, so some key members have less than optimal experience to fill the positions they encumber. However, they are committed and provide the best services they can. The LE staff are proficient and professional.

Marked improvements have been made in all administrative sections. OIG's previous inspection report criticized virtually every aspect of administrative operations and contained 56 formal recommendations pertaining to this area. This inspection resulted in only eight formal recommendations in the administrative area. Notwithstanding the progress made during the past year, the management section must complete major projects that will affect post's transition to normalcy. That transition includes the consolidation of administrative services with USAID, the move to the NEC by March 2008, and the rationalization of its housing inventory. These three undertakings could markedly reduce administrative, logistical, and security costs in addition to improving employee quality of life.

⁸ Inspection of Embassy Port-au-Prince, report number ISP/I-00-04, March 2000.

RIGHTSIZING

During the inspection, the Department redesignated Embassy Port-au-Prince from Tier 1 to Tier 2 for the purposes of Department/USAID administrative services consolidation. Tier 1 posts are required to consolidate services by the end of FY 2007. As a Tier 2 post, Embassy Port-au-Prince must consolidate by March 2008. The International Cooperative Administrative Support Services (ICASS) council voted on May 15 to move forward with the consolidation plan. The joint working groups have not been formed to develop single processes, services, and standards for the NEC. Much work remains to be done on a very compressed timeline. The management team seems to understand what it must do to catch up.

HUMAN RESOURCES

The human resource office is unduly taxed by the high turnover of LE staff. Constant recruitment places a strain on the five-person section and takes time away from handling routine personnel services for 800 LE staff. From 2005 to 2006, 183 LE staff resigned. So far in 2007, another 56 LE staff resigned. Of the total 239 resignations, about 150 or 63 percent were local guards. The majority of LE staff resigned to emigrate to the United States or Canada. Small numbers of LE staff left to seek higher salaries elsewhere in Port-au-Prince or were terminated for cause. This high turnover caused the human resources section to be late to submit the local guard salary survey to the Department and to recompute the medical and life insurance contract. The OIG team made informal recommendations to improve operations.

A regional human resources officer (RHRO) based at the Florida Region Center serves as the embassy's nonresident human resources officer. Overall, this arrangement is working well, but it needs to be fine tuned. Communication between post and the RHRO about personnel issues can be improved to avoid mistakes. Post authorized an additional month's pay for its LE staff. This additional benefit was in excess of the benefits offered in the local compensation plan. If consulted, the RHRO would have been able to advise against this action and provide post with guidance on how best to implement a salary increase.

Recommendation 18: Embassy Port-au-Prince, in coordination with the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs Florida Regional Center, should revise its memorandum of agreement for human resources services to include procedures for sharing information on personnel issues and define the regional human resources officer's role and responsibilities for reductions in force, local compensation plans, medical and life insurance contracts, consolidation of administrative services, and terminations. (Action: Embassy Port-au-Prince, in coordination with WHA)

Locally Employed Staff Concerns

Since 1976, Embassy Port-au-Prince has used the same medical and life insurance provider with the last amendment dated June 2000. The contract has expired, and a new contract needs to be awarded. The embassy has begun the solicitation process to explore the different options available from local and regional medical and life insurance providers. The Regional Procurement Support Office based in the Florida Regional Center in Ft. Lauderdale will handle the contract solicitation and award.

Wage increases and security are the major concerns of the LE staff. Although annual salary surveys support higher wage increases, actual increases for the past three years have been limited because of funding limitations. The 2007 proposed tiered wage increase of three to eight percent is still pending because of funding uncertainties in DS and the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs. DS funding limitations are of concern because local guards represent 60 percent of total LE staff. Post has submitted a request for downward exception rate ranges for those grades that are above market.

LE staff are also concerned about their personal security. The LE staff receives a 10 percent "unique condition of work" allowance. This allowance is given based on dangers, including kidnapping, robbery, and harassment that employees face while traveling to and from work. The security annex discusses security issues in greater detail.

The LE staff does not participate in the local social security system. Since 1986, Embassy Port-au-Prince's pension plan has been managed by an American firm located in the United States. The firm is planning to transfer the mission's account to a different administrative center located in a third country. The management staff is concerned that the change in support venue from the United States to the United Arab Emirates may affect service quality. The post believes that an audit should be conducted before the move is made. The OIG team agrees.

American Staffing

The tour of duty at Embassy Port-au-Prince is two years (with two authorized rest and recuperation trips). It is a 25 percent hardship differential post. It is historically difficult to staff, and is a service need differential post. Two employees are currently participating in the service need differential program. The cost of living allowance is 10 percent, and the danger pay allowance is 20 percent. A separate maintenance allowance is authorized for eligible family members. It is difficult to find bidders even with these incentives. Consequently, officers and specialists assigned to Port-au-Prince tend to be first-tour employees or mid-grade stretches. The lack of experience, staffing gaps, staffing stretches, evacuations, and four drawdowns have been disruptive. The majority of positions are now filled.

Equal Employment Opportunity

Embassy Port-au-Prince has not registered any Equal Employment Opportunity complaints in the past year. The Equal Employment Opportunity counselor has the required training. A Federal Women's Program coordinator has also been assigned. Equal Employment Opportunity procedures are incorporated in the local employee's handbook.

GENERAL SERVICES OPERATIONS

Facilities

The well-designed and spacious NEC is scheduled for substantial completion in January 2008, and the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations deserves great credit for its efforts to complete the compound under very difficult circumstances. Mission elements are now located in nine separate locations in the city, which hinders collaboration and communication. Multiple locations also add significantly to security costs, specifically to the maintenance of a very large local guard force. Consolidating all mission elements on the NEC, coupled with merging Department and USAID administrative services, should result in reduced staffing and cost savings. With only seven months remaining until substantial completion of the NEC, most embassy sections have not begun to plan their transition to the new facility. Many American and most LE staff supervisors have not looked at the architectural drawings or thought about the adjustments that will be necessary to work effectively in the new

building. Planning the physical move of the mission is at an early stage. The embassy just recently hired an eligible family member as a move coordinator, and she will undertake a formidable task.

At least two sections express some apprehension about the size and configuration of their space in the NEC. The general services office believes that the warehouse, which is 42 percent as large as the current combined warehouse space of the Department and USAID, will be too small. The consular chief believes that his section's space will be insufficient. Both conclusions are based on a simple size comparison and do not take into account the more efficient use of space in the new building.

The facilities manager expressed concern that the NEC's high tech systems are beyond the capabilities of his staff or local contractors to maintain. He has proposed contracting for operations and maintenance for two years after the completion of the NEC to serve as a transition and training vehicle for LE staff. Such a contract is budgeted as a building operating expense, a Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs responsibility to be shared by occupying agencies under ICASS per 6 FAH-5 H-341.12. The OIG team supports this approach.

Housing

With the completion of the NEC in sight, the mission's next priority is to improve housing. One idea is to cluster housing close to the NEC. Alternatives include a build-to-lease option or a lease on planned or ongoing construction. Either would improve the quality of life of employees and their families, reduce commuting time, and provide better facilities for social interaction in a high-risk environment. Cluster housing would result in savings for the residential guard program and make possible better maintenance and logistical support. Basic services, such as electricity and water, which the embassy must supply to all residential units, would be easier to deliver. Bringing this project about will be a challenge. Funding will require creative collaboration between the Bureaus of Western Hemisphere Affairs, Overseas Buildings Operations, and DS.

Recommendation 19: Embassy Port-au-Prince, in coordination with the Bureaus of Western Hemisphere Affairs, Overseas Buildings Operations, and Diplomatic Security, should develop and implement a plan to provide mission staff with safe, secure, and adequate housing at a cost most advantageous to the U.S. government. (Action: Embassy Port-au-Prince, in coordination with WHA, OBO, and DS)

Customs and Shipping

The customs and shipping section consists of a supervisor, an assistant, and an expeditor. The section oversees three contracts that provide services for unaccompanied air baggage, packing, and shipping. The section is not yet using “international through U.S. Government Bill of Lading,” which is the Department’s preferred method of shipping household effects. The embassy has identified two local companies that may be capable of shipping via this method. The section has no system to assess contractor performance, whether by inspection or customer questionnaires.

Recommendation 20: Embassy Port-au-Prince should develop and implement a plan to assess shipping contractors’ performance against contract standards. (Action: Embassy Port-au-Prince)

Since May 2006, the customs and shipping section has used the automated Integrated Logistics Management System to track household effects, air baggage, consumables, and supply shipments. The system provides timely feedback to the section and its customers.

The section administers the government and privately owned vehicle registration program, which represents an increasing workload. It also is involved in the sale of personal property including vehicles by official Americans departing post. The current procedures do not comply with the mandatory requirements of 22 CFR Part 136, detailed in 4 FAH-3 H-368.2, Employees’ Personal Property Sales Abroad.

Recommendation 21: Embassy Port-au-Prince should bring its procedures governing the sale of employees’ personal property including vehicles into compliance with regulatory requirements in Department regulations. (Action: Embassy Port-au-Prince)

Procurement

The procurement section consists of a supervisor, three purchasing agents, and two purchasing clerks. The section has taken steps to improve its processes by using purchase cards when possible. In January 2007, the embassy implemented the Post Administrative Software Suite procurement application, which has improved management controls and coordination with other sections.

Property Management

The general services office was forced to relocate its warehouse under arduous conditions. The move was completed in May 2006. The storage areas for nonexpendable and expendable property are well organized and neatly maintained. A 17 member team performs its duties well, in spite of relative inexperience. Personnel were knowledgeable, and their records generally were complete. Warehouse staff located items selected at random from an inventory list, but two of them had been moved to the disposal location without an annotation in the records. The warehouse staff agreed that the lack of access to automated systems has been a problem. Consolidation of the warehouse in the NEC should resolve this issue.

Safety, Health, and Environmental Management

Driving conditions in Port-au-Prince are dangerous and unpredictable. Traffic is heavy, and streets and roads are narrow and poorly maintained. There are few sidewalks for crowds of pedestrians. The city extends into surrounding hills, where streets are steep, winding, and poorly drained. During the past 12 months, vehicles driven by embassy personnel were involved in three accidents that caused local national fatalities. The embassy should take all reasonable measures to minimize traffic accidents. The embassy has implemented a driver training program as part of a Department initiative to train and certify post instructors (typically the motor pool supervisor) in advanced safe-driving methods. The training program does not include occasional drivers, all employees, and family members.

Recommendation 22: Embassy Port-au-Prince should develop and implement a comprehensive driver training program that includes drivers of government-owned and privately owned vehicles. (Action: Embassy Port-au-Prince)

Motor Pool Operations

The motor pool maintenance section and warehouse were located in a sector of the city where gunfire and violence prevented employees from accessing the facilities. Then the embassy leased a facility in a safer part of the city. The move was conducted during the period between October 2005 and May 2006 under very difficult circumstances. The new facility had no vehicle maintenance infrastructure such as lifts and pits, so they were retrofitted to make the shop functional. It is not an ideal arrangement. The LE staff supervisor has served in his position for only three years

but has almost 20 years of automotive service experience in the private sector in the United States. With almost 140 ICASS and program vehicles, he and his staff shoulder a heavy workload. He has instituted a system of preventive maintenance using mileage as a benchmark, and his mechanics affix label reminders to the dashboards of vehicles. The maintenance supervisor also is responsible for the fuel program, which includes diesel and gasoline pumps located on the chancery grounds. He maintains the required records, and there are adequate internal controls in place.

The motor pool supervisor was the Department's Foreign Service national of the year in 2004. He supervises the dispatcher and all transportation services. He does an excellent job. The motor pool drivers complete daily usage forms. He ensures that other drivers, such as local guards and security personnel, also fill out the required forms. Few passengers are signing OF-108 forms. The OIG team informally recommended that they do so as this will strengthen management controls.

As the embassy transitions to more normal operations, its vehicle use policy continues to evolve. It is important to define, in some detail, what services will be provided in a variety of circumstances so that all employees will know what they can expect. The annual vehicle use memorandum is not current. The OIG team informally recommended that it be reviewed and reissued.

Financial Management

Overall, the financial management section effectively supports its ICASS subscribers, but the loss of two experienced LE staff has hurt the section's performance, particularly in voucher processing. The section has outsourced some vouchering to the Charleston Financial Services Center's Distressed Post Support Unit.

International Cooperative Administrative Support Services

The ICASS system functions well. The embassy provides administrative services to 12 agencies. The ICASS council meets regularly. Relations among agencies are professional and productive. Department and USAID administrative services will be consolidated as part of the move to the NEC scheduled for March 2008. As part of the consolidation, ICASS service standards will be revised and modified to address agencies' procedural differences.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND INFORMATION SECURITY

The information management (IM) section provides adequate support to approximately 284 users mission-wide. The employees follow most Department information management and security policies and guidelines and effectively meet customer needs. The IM staff has been thoroughly trained. Information systems security officer duties are also performed effectively, but there are areas that require attention. These include the rightsizing initiative, tracking of helpdesk service calls, waivers for dedicated Internet networks, and enhanced user security practices. The OIG team identified a best practice regarding the labeling of hard drives and safes. That and other security issues are reported in the security annex.

The information management officer (IMO) oversees the information programs center (IPC) and the information systems center (ISC), which includes managing and securing the Department's classified and Sensitive But Unclassified computer networks, in addition to several dedicated Internet networks (DIN). The information programs officer supervises two information management specialists in the IPC. The IPC supports the classified network, which consists of 29 workstations and five servers. The information programs officer oversees 15 LE staff, including switchboard operators, telephone and radio maintenance personnel, and the staff that manage the mail room and reproduction services. The information systems officer manages the day-to-day operations of the ISC with the support of three LE staff. The ISC staff manages the Sensitive But Unclassified network of 240 workstations and 16 servers.

Information Management Staffing

Embassy Port-au-Prince is currently undergoing a rightsizing initiative that will affect IM staffing. Current proposals call for a decrease of one information management specialist position. In discussions with IM management, the current staffing levels (IMO plus four Americans) were described as adequate. IM management believes that decreasing the staffing by one position would adversely affect operations. Daily operations are complicated by difficult working conditions and a constant cycle of incoming TDYers to help with the move to the NEC in 2008. IM management believes that the relocation to the NEC will add to the workload. The new model, PBX and other new equipment to be installed in the NEC will require extensive on-the-job training of post personnel; and many miles of cable will need to be installed. At the same time, full operations will have to be maintained at the current chancery and annexes. After the move, 122 USAID users plus 33 Centers for Disease Control users will require Classnet and OpenNet access and support following consolidation.

Pouch Escort

The classified pouch escort duty was the responsibility of the IPC during post's drawdown status. However, an April 30, 2007 post notice informed staff that the classified pouch escort duty is now a designated responsibility of the duty officer. Post's management expects that pouch escort duties will be shared by embassy and USAID staff.

Help Desk Tracking of Service Calls

The IM staff is currently using a web-based work order system to track and resolve equipment use and requests. The work order system does not track help desk service requests. The IM help desk is responsible for answering service calls, noting the issues, and resolving problems by either troubleshooting issues or by transferring them to another IM staff member. Currently, IM management cannot ensure that the helpdesk provides quality customer service because they are not tracking computer service requests.

The OIG team suggested the embassy adopt the Department's universal trouble ticket system, and IM management has begun preliminary discussions with the Department for its implementation.

Patch Management

Embassy Port-au-Prince is currently a pilot post for a centrally managed system patch regime. Currently, Embassy Port-au-Prince is reporting the status of patches applied to servers and workstations at post. It has a patch compliance rating of 99.6 percent.

QUALITY OF LIFE

SECURITY CONCERNS

Embassy Port-au-Prince has correctly focused on protecting embassy personnel and their families in a critical crime environment. Violent crime is pervasive and includes kidnappings, carjackings, robberies, and home invasions. Spontaneous road-blocks, protests, demonstrations, and random gunfire are common. Armed gangs prey on persons believed to be affluent. A more detailed treatment of security issues is contained in the classified security annex (Report Number ISP-S-07-39A).

COMMUNITY LIAISON OFFICE

The community liaison office coordinator assumed her position two months ago and is enthusiastic about the job. She attended training in Washington and has set specific goals with the management officer that address what she believes to be the post's most pressing needs. She will reenergize the sponsor program and develop an orientation program that will familiarize new employees and family members with the organization of the embassy and the services available at post. The coordinator is reaching out to the official community and plans to issue a questionnaire to assess the priorities of her clients. She will develop options for recreation in an environment where few facilities exist. She seems capable and committed to carrying out this full agenda.

MEDICAL UNIT

The medical unit provides high quality medical services for American personnel. Both OIG's workplace and quality of life questionnaire and ICASS survey scores were high. The medical unit is staffed with a local-hire contract doctor and nurse. A regional psychiatrist based in Mexico City makes quarterly visits. A regional medical officer based in Ft. Lauderdale makes quarterly visits to assess the medical units' compliance with the policies and procedures of the Department.

OVERSEAS SCHOOLS

The Department supports _____ with ICASS grants that in FY 2006 totaled \$90,000. The grants funded the salaries of U.S.-citizen, U.S.-trained, or U.S.-certified professional staff, and the purchase of U.S. educational materials and equipment. The grants also supported staff development and training. The Department provided \$180,000 for security improvements that included shatter resistant window film, a public address system, door/window grilles, a perimeter fence, and a closed-circuit television system. The school enjoys a good working relationship with the management office and regional security office. It continues to work with the regional security officer on projects such as an addition to the perimeter wall, construction of a second means of egress from the compound, and an internal emergency radio system. The Department's Office of Overseas Schools has taken particular interest in _____

School officials remain hopeful that conditions and enrollment will improve.

MANAGEMENT CONTROLS

The chief of mission's certification of management controls for Embassy Port-au-Prince dated July 7, 2006, did not report any material weaknesses. Overall, management controls are in place and seem to be effective. The administrative notice that designates officers to fulfill specific functions is current.

AUTOMATION

Embassy Port-au-Prince has implemented Post Administrative Software Suite applications that automate many administrative functions and enhance management controls. They also provide supervisors with a clearer process visibility, and impose procedural discipline and a separation of duties. The embassy is using the software for procurement, motor vehicle, real estate, work orders, property, and supply management.

PREMIUM TRAVEL

Controls over the use of premium travel are effective. There was only one instance of premium travel between October 1, 2005, and May 20, 2007. The sole business class ticket issued was for travel in excess of 14 hours and was properly authorized using form DS-4087, *Authorization Request for Business Class Air Travel*. The embassy did not issue any first class tickets during this period.

PUBLIC DIPLOMACY GRANTS

The public affairs section effectively and properly administers its grants program. The OIG team reviewed the grants files for completeness. The files contained required financial expenditure reports, biographical sketches, and performance completion reports. For FY 2006, the section awarded 26 grants totaling \$299,000. The grants were issued to support local democracy and empowerment projects and English language training programs.

4TH OF JULY DONATIONS

Embassy Port-au-Prince received 4th of July donations from some non-U.S. firms and organizations. Guidance contained in State cable 048012 of April 11, 2007, and in 2 FAM 962.1-6 specifically states that all donations must be from U.S. organizations or firms, which includes its foreign subsidiaries, franchisees, or distributors. The OIG team counseled the embassy on following proper procedure for soliciting gifts for official representation events.

OFFICIAL RESIDENCE CONTRACTS

Embassy Port-au-Prince does not have valid employment contracts in place for household employees of the Ambassador and DCM. A valid contract, per 3 FAH-1 H-3252, is needed to protect the interests of the employer and employees.

Recommendation 24: Embassy Port-au-Prince should obtain valid contracts for all household employees of the Ambassador and deputy chief of mission. (Action: Embassy Port-au-Prince)

Security Practices

ALLOWANCES

Embassy Port-au-Prince has not updated its allowance applications in accordance with the Department's Standardized Regulations 074 and 075. The foreign per diem rates and hardship differential reports are overdue. The danger pay allowance has not been revised to reflect the change in conditions in Port-au-Prince. The OIG team made informal recommendations on these points.

FORMAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recommendation 1:** Embassy Port-au-Prince, in coordination with the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs and the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization, should abolish two American positions in the Haiti Stabilization Initiative office in Port-au-Prince. (Action: Embassy Port-au-Prince, in coordination with WHA and S/CRS)
- Recommendation 2:** Embassy Port-au-Prince should prepare a series of think pieces on the prospects for U.S. policy in Haiti with and without a UN commitment at current levels, and an analysis of where Haiti is today versus where the United States wants it to be in the long term with an estimate of the resources needed to realize the desired outcomes. (Action: Embassy Port-au-Prince)
- Recommendation 3:** Embassy Port-au-Prince should either arrange for coverage of the economic section or combine the political and economic sections to deal with the early departure of the two officers in the economic/commercial section. (Action: Embassy Port-au-Prince)
- Recommendation 4:** Embassy Port-au-Prince should prepare an immediate report on investor intentions and activities and implement a plan for a series of follow-up reports on the subject. (Action: Embassy Port-au-Prince)
- Recommendation 5:** Embassy Port-au-Prince should establish a public diplomacy working group to better coordinate planned events and a strategy for improving public awareness of U.S. contributions to Haiti. (Action: Embassy Port-au-Prince)
- Recommendation 6:** Embassy Port-au-Prince should establish a mechanism for closer coordination of the public affairs section with other agencies at post on polling and, if necessary, seek supplementary polling through the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Office of Opinion Research. (Action: Embassy Port-au-Prince, in coordination with INR)
- Recommendation 7:** Embassy Port-au-Prince, in coordination with the Bureau of International Information Programs, should determine the locations and institutions that would best serve the mission's interests for inaugurating American Corners in Haiti and initiate discussions with them. (Action: Embassy Port-au-Prince, in coordination with IIP)

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.

TRAVEL, REPORTING, AND REPRESENTATION PLANS

The embassy does not have a travel plan, but the Ambassador does travel as do other officers to the extent security conditions permit. As conditions improve and travel increases, the embassy would benefit from a travel plan that establishes priorities and sets aside necessary funding. There is not yet a reporting plan at post. Officers have assigned areas of responsibility but do not have a work plan against which their performance can be measured. The Ambassador shares over half the representational funds available to post with other sections. As of the third quarter, however, six sections had used only a fraction of their allotment. A representational plan would help set goals for each section of the embassy and make it possible to objectively monitor the use of representational funds quarter by quarter. Although no longer required, this type of planning is a useful management tool.

Informal Recommendation 1: Embassy Port-au-Prince should have the deputy chief of mission review planning processes at post, and then the embassy should prepare a travel plan, a reporting plan, and a plan for the use of representational funds.

SUPPORTING OFFICIAL VISITORS

Some officers assigned support of official visitors spend too much time reinventing what should be standardized procedures.

Informal Recommendation 2: Embassy Port-au-Prince should revise its visitor checklists to include more information on what needs to be done and how to do it.

CONSULAR MANAGEMENT

ACS receives clients on a first-come, first-served basis. Unexpectedly high numbers of clients, together with only two service windows, place undue pressure on ACS staff.

Informal Recommendation 3: Embassy Port-au-Prince should see clients for non-emergency services on an appointment basis.

ACS relies on e-mail and cell phone to communicate with wardens. In the event of a crisis, these methods of communication could be compromised, and wardens would not know how to proceed. Guidance for wardens on assembly points is not included in the mission's emergency action plan.

Informal Recommendation 4: Embassy Port-au-Prince should establish standard operating procedures for wardens in the event of the loss of e-mail or phone communications.

MANAGEMENT

Embassy Port-au-Prince's post profile contains outdated information. In some instances, information found in the post profile is over two years old.

Informal Recommendation 5: Embassy Port-au-Prince should update its post profile.

HUMAN RESOURCES OPERATIONS

The hardship differential report is overdue and should have been submitted to the Department by April 2007, in accordance with the Department's Standardized Regulations.

Informal Recommendation 6: Embassy Port-au-Prince should revise and update its hardship differential report and submit it to the Office of Allowances.

The foreign per diem survey report is overdue and should have been submitted to the Department by March 2007, in accordance with the Department's Standardized Regulations.

Informal Recommendation 7: Embassy Port-au-Prince should revise and update its foreign per diem survey report and submit it to the Office of Allowances.

In some instances, work requirements statements are not prepared within 45 days of the start of the rating period of American officers and specialists in accordance with 3 FAH-1 H-2815.1.

Informal Recommendation 8: Embassy Port-au-Prince should send out periodic notifications reminding employees to prepare their work requirements statements.

In some instances, performance evaluations have not been completed within the time frame for all American officers, specialists, eligible family members, and local Americans in accordance with 3 FAM 2813.3 and 4, 3 FAM 8217, and 3 FAH-2 H-135.

Informal Recommendation 9: Embassy Port-au-Prince should send out periodic notifications reminding American supervisors to prepare performance evaluations within the time frames contained in the Foreign Affairs Manual.

In some instances, within-grade increases for foreign national employees are not processed upon completion of the minimum waiting period.

Informal Recommendation 10: Embassy Port-au-Prince should send out periodic notifications reminding American and locally employed staff supervisors to prepare performance evaluations on a timely basis so that within-grade increases can be processed.

LE staff are concerned about kidnapping and other violence. Women are particularly concerned when told they must attend after-hours representational events.

Informal Recommendation 11: Embassy Port-au-Prince should make provisions for secure transportation of locally employed staff to support after sundown representational functions or not demand or request their presence at such events.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT OPERATIONS

In some instances, unannounced verification of the subcashier funds are not being conducted at least monthly when the advance amount is U.S. dollar equivalent 1,000 or more and quarterly if the amount is less than U.S. dollar equivalent 1,000 as required by 4 FAH-3 H-397.2-3.

Informal Recommendation 12: Embassy Port-au-Prince should conduct verifications of cash advances to subcashiers.

According to 4 FAM 033.1-3 a. and 4 FAH-3 H-397.1-2, cash verifications should be conducted in an unpredictable pattern. Embassy Port-au-Prince is conducting cash verifications in a predictable pattern, usually at the end of each month.

Informal Recommendation 13: Embassy Port-au-Prince should conduct cash verifications using an unpredictable pattern at varying times of the month.

Embassy Port-au-Prince has not liquidated obligations for some procurement actions that are over two years old.

Informal Recommendation 14: Embassy Port-au-Prince should develop procedures to periodically review procurements to determine whether funds can be deobligated.

GENERAL SERVICES OPERATIONS

Embassy Port-au-Prince has not done the annual review of and republished its policies regarding business and other authorized use of government-owned vehicles as required by 14 FAM 418.1-2(F).

Informal Recommendation 15: Embassy Port-au-Prince should review and issue the annual vehicle policy memorandum.

Few passengers sign in block 13 of the form OF-108, which confirms that transportation was provided to them by government-owned vehicle. This is a management control mechanism that accounts for driver time, vehicle use, and fuel consumption. (14 FAH-1 H-814.1)

Informal Recommendation 16: Embassy Port-au-Prince should develop and implement a policy that requires passengers to sign form OF-108.

Embassy Port-au-Prince does not require motor pool drivers to undergo periodical physical examinations to ensure they have no medical conditions that would adversely affect their job performance. The Department's motor vehicle safety management program is in the process of adding to the Foreign Affairs Manual a standard that drivers be medically requalified at least every two years. Given the incidence of official traffic accidents at post, it would be prudent to eliminate medical reasons as a factor.

Informal Recommendation 17: Embassy Port-au-Prince should develop and implement a plan to ensure drivers undergo periodic physical examinations and are medically qualified to perform their duties.

Embassy Port-au-Prince has a 25-foot Boston Whaler power boat that is not accounted for in any property records as required by 14 FAM 414.1.

Informal Recommendation 18: Embassy Port-au-Prince should establish property accountability for its Boston Whaler power boat.

Embassy Port-au-Prince has decided to maintain a Boston Whaler power boat for official use and for possible recreational use when it reestablishes its American employee association. It does not have published policies regarding its use and safety requirements (15 FAM 912).

Informal Recommendation 19: Embassy Port-au-Prince should develop and implement a plan that governs the use of its Boston Whaler power boat and prescribes safety requirements for operators and passengers.

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PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS

| | Name | Arrival Date |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------|
| Executive Office: | | |
| Ambassador | Janet A. Sanderson | 03//06 |
| Deputy Chief of Mission | Thomas C. Tighe | 08/06 |
| Chiefs of Section: | | |
| Admin/Management | Thomas Doherty | 06/06 |
| - Budget & Fiscal | - Maurice Olfus | 09/06 |
| - Information Management | - Kathryn Clement | 08/04 |
| - General Services Office | - Steven Goertz | 04/06 |
| Consul General | Jay Smith | 08/04 |
| Economic/Commercial Affairs | James Roberts | 09/06 |
| Narcotics Affairs | <i>Vacant</i> (Richard Weeks, TDY) | |
| Overseas Building Operations | Rodney Evans | 06/06 |
| Political Affairs | John Mariz | 09/05 |
| Public Diplomacy | James Ellickson-Brown | 09/06 |
| Regional Affairs | Elizabeth Maze | 06/06 |
| Regional Security Office | Edwin Guard | 08/06 |
| Other Agencies: | | |
| USAID | Paul Tuebner | 07/06 |
| Centers for Disease Control | Anna Likos | 01/07 |
| Coast Guard Liaison Office | Daniel Deptula | 08/06 |
| Department of Agriculture | Vacant | |
| Defense Attaché Office | Kendall Nash | 08/06 |
| Drug Enforcement Agency | Gerald Graves | 08/05 |
| Marine Security Guard | Matthew Blais | 01/06 |
| Military Liaison Office | David Allen | 08/05 |
| USCIS | David Fagan | 01/06 |

ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| ACS | American citizens services |
| DCM | Deputy chief of mission |
| Department | Department of State |
| DIN | Dedicated Internet network |
| DS | Bureau of Diplomatic Security |
| DVC | Digital videoconferencing |
| ELO | Entry-level officer |
| HNP | Haitian National Police |
| HSI | Haiti Stabilization Initiative |
| ICASS | International Cooperative Administrative Support Services |
| IIP | Bureau of International Information Programs |
| IM | Information management |
| IMO | Information management officer |
| IPC | Information programs center |
| IRC | Information Resources Center |
| ISC | Information Services Center |
| IV | Immigrant visa |
| IVLP | International Visitor Leadership Program |
| LE | Locally employed |
| MINUSTAH | UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti |
| MSP | Mission Strategic Plan |
| NEC | New embassy compound |
| NIV | Nonimmigrant visa |
| OIG | Office of Inspector General |
| PAO | Public affairs officer |
| PAS | Public affairs section |

PASS Post Administrative Software Suite
RHRO Regional human resources officer
TDY Temporary duty
USAID U.S. Agency for International Development
VOA Voice of America

FRAUD, WASTE, ABUSE, OR MISMANAGEMENT
of Federal programs
and resources hurts everyone.

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