



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

**Office of Inspections**

**Inspection of  
Bureau of Information Resource Management,  
Office of EDiplomacy**

**Report Number ISP-I-11-62, August 2011**

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**Office of Inspector General**

## **PURPOSE, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY OF THE INSPECTION**

This inspection was conducted in accordance with the Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation, as issued in 2011 by the Council of Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency, and the Inspector's Handbook, as issued by the Office of Inspector General for the U.S. Department of State (Department) and the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG).

### **PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

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

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

### **METHODOLOGY**

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



United States Department of State  
and the Broadcasting Board of Governors

*Office of Inspector General*

## PREFACE

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

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

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

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

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

Harold W. Geisel  
Deputy Inspector General

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## Key Judgments

- A small, agile innovation incubator in the Bureau of Information Resource Management (IRM), the Office of eDiplomacy (eDiplomacy) has introduced a number of new technologies and business practices to the Department of State (Department). Department employees and senior managers alike view eDiplomacy staff as enthusiastic and innovative, with the ability to take on unusual projects and to support new technology applications.
- EDiplomacy lacks a clear, agreed-upon mission statement that defines key goals and objectives. Such a document would enable eDiplomacy to delineate core functions, manage projects, allocate resources, and make logical management decisions.
- A culture of measurement and evaluation is not fully developed in eDiplomacy. With the absence of performance measurement process, management has few means to evaluate, control, budget, and measure the success of its projects. It is also difficult to determine the appropriate staffing levels needed to accomplish eDiplomacy's stated objectives.
- Despite a steady pursuit of outside validation, eDiplomacy lacks a strategic approach to marketing its innovations within the Department. The development of a robust outreach strategy would make eDiplomacy's accomplishments better known to users in Washington and abroad.
- The current organizational placement of the Customer Liaison Division (CLD) within eDiplomacy diminishes its effectiveness, its clout within IRM, and its visibility to the rest of the Department. Relocating CLD so that it reports directly to the Bureau of Business Management and Planning Directorate (BMP) would improve its effectiveness. .
- The Diplomatic Innovation Division (DID) has clearly benefited from a new team organizational structure, which should be formalized; however, the absence of project management processes is hindering its ability to initiate, prioritize, and implement programs appropriately.
- The External Affairs branch has valuable access to information, resources, and contacts from its work with Federal agencies, foreign governments, and international organizations. However, the branch should be relocated from CLD to the Office of the Chief Information Officer to better serve policy and operational elements in the Department.
- EDiplomacy staff members who handle information systems security officer (ISSO) responsibilities do not have the required designation letters and thus are not recognized within the office and the Department as having such responsibilities.
- Stronger controls over supply procurement and storage are needed to facilitate better expense control.

The inspection took place in Washington, D.C, between May 2 and June 3, 2011. (b) (6)



## Context

“Pinstripe-wearing diplomats will work side-by-side with khaki-clad techies in the State Department's E-Diplomacy Office.” At least, that is how *Government Computer News* in 2002 hailed the establishment of eDiplomacy, a new Department office whose goal was to “make sure the technological resources are responsive to user needs and core business practice.” The magazine predicted that the new office would “bring diplomats into the mainstream of technology development at State.”

Senior officials credit eDiplomacy's DID with a number of innovations in support of the Department's work, including Diplopedia, an online encyclopedia of Foreign Affairs information that is modeled on the Internet's Wikipedia; the Communities@State initiative, a knowledge management program that allow groups of widely dispersed employees with a common interest or task to share knowledge and stay connected; and Corridor, a secure online professional networking platform that resembles Facebook or LinkedIn. DID staff launched—and in most cases continues to support—initiatives such as the Secretary's Sounding Board, the Virtual Student Foreign Service eIntern program, and the Tech@State conferences. Indeed, the office lists more than 40 active projects on its SharePoint site.

The other half of eDiplomacy is CLD, which was realigned within IRM to eDiplomacy in 2010. CLD staff members are assigned to as few as one or as many as five bureaus and offices in order to understand end-user requirements, facilitate communication with internal IRM units, and manage the delivery of IRM services. CLD employees track customer satisfaction and solve problems. A small subunit carries out liaison with other U.S. Government agencies and foreign/multinational entities.

Employees and senior managers both inside IRM and elsewhere in the Department view eDiplomacy staff as enthusiastic and innovative, with the ability to take on unusual projects and support new technology applications. The once-small, agile task force has grown and has been integrated into the IRM organization structure. The director of eDiplomacy, an FS-01 economic-cone officer, reports to the deputy chief information officer for BMP and meets frequently with the chief information officer (CIO).

The CIO, drawing on the conclusions of the Secretary's Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review, has asked eDiplomacy to think about the kind of information resource operations the Department will need in the future. Referred to as the IRM 2020 project, this study has been embraced by the eDiplomacy director and his staff. The OIG team found the effort to be potentially useful in examining the far-reaching changes in information technology (IT) that are coming—be it cloud computing, handheld tablets, or other developments. Some believe that IRM in the future will be less intensely concerned with operating hardware and more focused on business process advising on how to manage the Department's information resources. If so, there are major changes ahead in the way the Department recruits, trains, and promotes IRM personnel.

At the time of the inspection, eDiplomacy had 54 full-time-equivalent positions and 17 contractors supporting its operations. The office has welcomed a number of interns, Franklin Fellows, and other employees needing a temporary position between formal assignments. In FY 2011, eDiplomacy's annual operating budget was approximately \$4.26 million (excluding direct-hire salaries).

## Executive Direction

### Mission and Goals

eDiplomacy is associated in the minds of most Department employees with some of the good technological and institutional changes that have made work more efficient and communication easier. Not only is eDiplomacy credited with advocating policy changes for BlackBerry use and bringing Diplopedia to the workplace, it is also generally known to advocate on behalf of users regarding modern technology.

The good news is that many employees in the Department have heard about eDiplomacy. However, many also view it as an office in search of a mission. Indeed, the OIG inspectors identified five different mission statements. Three of these date back to when the office was established in 2002 and reflect the office's initial mandate:

- give Department end users a voice in information technology decisionmaking;
- improve communication and collaboration within the Department and with Foreign Affairs partner agencies; and
- design and implement a better way to share knowledge and information.

According to the director, eDiplomacy has followed those three priorities ever since. More recently, in support of the Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review objectives, eDiplomacy has also added two more mission statements:

- institute techcraft for diplomats to catalyze collaboration between the worlds of technology, diplomacy, and development; and
- prepare IRM for a rapidly changing technology profile within the Department.

eDiplomacy has several other similar mission statements. For example, its intranet Web site says its mission is to identify new collaborative technologies in the private sector that benefit the Department. Also, its homepage lays out a scope of work that seems to mirror the office's original purpose, saying eDiplomacy has a unique, interrelated three-part mandate. Further, within Diplopedia, the office describes its own mission as being to imagine, create, advocate for, and educate about platforms for working collaboratively and sharing knowledge across all of the Department's diverse communities.

In the course of many interviews with eDiplomacy employees and Department employees familiar with its accomplishments, it became clear that eDiplomacy's work by DID staff falls into four activity baskets:

- technology that is useful to the Department's employees and leaders (e.g. Diplopedia, several of the Communities@State, and the newest, a professional networking tool called Corridor);
- advocacy for new technologies that will serve the needs of Department users (e.g., connection technologies, desktop video conferencing, tablet computing, and BlackBerry cameras);

- advising on potential technology solutions to workplace needs (e.g., a dashboard for the Combined Federal Campaign, a Web site for human rights, workflow management for the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs (EUR) Southeastern Europe office, and the classified home page project); and
- taskings from Department leaders (e.g., Sounding Board, Virtual Student Foreign Service program, TechCamps, and Tech@State conferences).

It is beneficial for eDiplomacy that staff can point to multiple mission statements in various locations that reflect different formulations. However, none of them are effective unless the employees accept these statements as true mandates that actually guide the work of the office and staff.

Without clear mission statements, it can be perceived by Department officials that eDiplomacy may be encroaching on another office's mandate. One senior Department official questioned why eDiplomacy moves forward on projects that were considered a nonpriority for the Department. Such action by eDiplomacy, the senior official said, implies that either eDiplomacy perceives its judgment is better than that of other senior officials or that eDiplomacy has an abundance of funds to work on any mentioned project. EDiplomacy must paint some "yellow lines down the innovation highway and stay in its lane."

IRM's Bureau Strategic and Resource Plan (BSRP) is a good starting point for defining eDiplomacy's mission and vision. The BSRP lists its first goal as "digital diplomacy," which focuses on applying modern tools to the tasks of diplomacy and expanding the use of collaborative information development. The BSRP also calls for obtaining a range of tools and methods for creating, packaging, and sharing information throughout the Department and with external partners and audiences worldwide. However, Department employees were not given the capability to create effective, tailored information products. Thus eDiplomacy's mission statement was not aligned with IRM's BSRP to ensure that its outputs are in line with the overall Department mission.

**Recommendation 1:** The Office of eDiplomacy, in coordination with the Office of the Chief Information Officer, should establish and mandate a mission statement for the office that outlines its core focus and mission for the Department of State. (Action: eDiplomacy, in coordination with CIO)

EDiplomacy also lacks completed goals and objectives for its divisions. The failure to set clearly defined and widely accepted goals and objectives for eDiplomacy operations has many ramifications. It leads to confusion among staff members and customers, inefficiency in operations, flawed decisionmaking, imperfect allocation of resources, and an inability to measure performance or results.

DID employees have varying levels of clarity and definition of their goals and objectives, which will be discussed later in the report. Likewise, many CLD employees are not informed about how their own tasks relate to the DID operation or larger eDiplomacy goals. They report that eDiplomacy office management seems uninterested in their work. Newly arrived employees, especially those coming from overseas posts, report anxiety and disorientation due to the ambiguity and unstructured nature of eDiplomacy.

The Department requires that subordinate offices develop their goals and objectives on the basis of the BSRP. Office leaders must formally define the program goals and key objectives in such a way that employees buy in. To be an effective management tool, the goals and objectives serve as a ruler against which management decisions are measured. The goals and objectives lead to specific task plans and budgets (of both money and staff time) so that they link with policy priorities. Using office goals and objectives, senior leaders can ensure that financial, contracting, software purchase, travel, staffing, and training plans all coordinate under the BSRP. Further, the work requirements of individuals align to eDiplomacy's goals and objectives. An established mission statement with identifiable goals and objectives will assist eDiplomacy in setting their priorities, guiding their work, and properly allocating staff resources based on needs.

**Recommendation 2:** The Office of eDiplomacy, in coordination with the Office of the Chief Information Officer, should develop and disseminate goals and objectives for its office, divisions, and branches/teams to define their core functions and develop corresponding operational plans. (Action: eDiplomacy, in coordination with CIO)

## **Leadership**

eDiplomacy and its current leadership win praise from many in the Department for creativity, energy, and positive attitude. One IRM executive suggested that an important measure of eDiplomacy's success is the degree to which its services or consultations are sought out. In a story the inspectors encountered several times, eDiplomacy was commended by a senior official at the White House as "the go-to group" for the Open Government initiative and for making the Department "one of the most responsive" of the Federal agencies. Other senior Department officials extolled eDiplomacy's leadership for being highly responsive to last-minute, high-level taskings.

The current director of eDiplomacy, an FS-01 economic officer, arrived in July 2009. In the words of senior IRM executives, "he has unique and desirable skills that make him perfect for the job" and "has been pivotal to eDiplomacy's success." He had accepted the position before IRM leadership decided to add CLD to the existing eDiplomacy organization. At that time, in January 2010, what had been eDiplomacy became DID. Most people still refer to DID as "eDiplomacy." Two FS-01 officers serve as deputy directors of eDiplomacy: an economic officer supervises DID, and an information management officer directs CLD staff.

Several observers told the OIG team that, prior to the current director's arrival, eDiplomacy too often seemed to reflect the personal enthusiasms of who was in charge at the time. For example, one individual was interested in Virtual Presence Posts, so that became a focus of eDiplomacy's efforts. Another had a different project. The current director has brought a broader, more balanced approach to the job.

Although the director is genuinely well liked by staff and commended for his enthusiasm and positive attitude, many eDiplomacy employees question the way he manages the office and prioritizes tasks.

The absence of a steady management hand manifests itself in a constantly changing array of priorities that keep the staff off balance and unsure of what is important. During the inspection, eDiplomacy management returned from a Department town hall meeting on IRM

customer service, where the office had reportedly volunteered to review all 300-plus Sounding Board suggestions submitted to IRM since the Board's inception, distribute them to the IRM subject experts, solicit and compile their responses, and provide a report to the CIO. Several employees wondered what this has to do with eDiplomacy's mission and why it was not being handled by front office staff assistants. The inspectors found the pace and introduction of new ideas, with apparently little regard for eDiplomacy's core priorities, surprising.

A number of employees believe the director and his deputies do not know much about what the employees are, in fact, doing. This was true not only for CLD employees, who believe office management has no interest in or time for their work, but also for DID employees. They told stories of nonsensical questions, malapropos introductions, and "drive-by taskings" levied without regard to the particular individual's skills or responsibilities. Inspectors observed DID meetings in which employees bluntly stated that they had wasted time or been unable to get direction or clear instructions from the leadership. Contractors expressed willingness to do whatever is required but also firmly insisted upon the need for guidance.

The office leadership has proved adept at finding resources, but not necessarily the most appropriate ones for the job at hand. The director has often recruited an available and talented individual without determining beforehand what skills are needed most for current projects. He argues that a deep pool of talent with new ideas is highly appropriate to an office charged with promoting innovation.

The director describes himself as entrepreneurial and able to accomplish tasks quickly. His staff agrees that the director is adept at getting things done and motivating people. The office leadership, especially the director, is supportive of staff in terms of giving credit where it is due, ensuring fairness, and recognizing others' achievements. The director and his deputies are accessible, approachable, and part of the team, as evidenced by the director taking a cubicle in the center of the office, as Intel CEO Andy Grove famously did. The director notes that an open environment allows people to communicate directly and solve problems in a collaborative fashion. This arrangement also discourages others from complaining about their own space.

The director recognizes that his effervescent approach may sometimes be disruptive and is open to suggestions for improvement. In such a situation, one might expect the deputies to bring order to the work environment; however, they have not been fully successful in this respect.

An important element of eDiplomacy's mission is bringing new technology solutions to bear on core Department tasks. Important as it is to advocate for new technologies in the Department, it is equally important to improve the way age-old tasks are performed. In many respects, the Department conducts its work in much the same way today as it did a century ago. Reporting cables, media summaries and economic data—not to mention consular requests and human rights reports—pour into Washington every morning from the embassies and consulates around the globe. Junior officers flag the most interesting or relevant for their office director, who in turn brings a few items to the attention of the Deputy Assistant Secretary, and so on.

Lost within that massive intake of information are significant details and highly relevant emerging patterns. EDiplomacy could achieve the second half of its core mission by seeking innovative ways for the Department to conduct its work and leverage its existing resources. One

starting point would be researching how other government agencies filter large amounts of data. Another would entail consulting the academic community and/or the private sector. For example (and staying within IRM's area of responsibility), eDiplomacy could reach out to other Federal agencies and the private sector to learn from their experience and take advantage of their current research in areas such as "data mining"; the identification of patterns of contextual relationships in large quantities of text; and predictive signaling of growing social and political discontent, based on the analysis of social media flows in foreign environments.

**Recommendation 3:** The Office of eDiplomacy should develop a plan to reach out, in keeping with its own fundamental mission, to other Federal agencies and the private sector in pursuit of technologies and innovations that could significantly transform the Department of State's ability to exploit its existing information resources. (Action: eDiplomacy)

## **Organizational Structure**

Subsequent to delivery of the 2008 Gartner Group study,<sup>1</sup> a significant realignment occurred within IRM, which led to eDiplomacy experiencing most of its staff growth with the merger of CLD into the existing organizational structure. EDiplomacy is now broken into two divisions: DID and CLD. DID is informally broken into three teams: DiploTech, Knowledge Leadership, and Policy and Outreach. CLD is organized into three branches: Domestic, Regional, and External Affairs.

### ***Diplomatic Innovation Division***

The original eDiplomacy office became what is now the DID portion of eDiplomacy. It is the user advocate for diplomats, analysts, managers, and locally employed staff, helping them to improve their ability to access, contribute, and share knowledge. Several signature projects characterize the eDiplomacy knowledge management strategy, including Diplopedia, Communities@State, and Corridor. DID also provides policy, management, and technical staff support to Web initiatives, such as the Virtual Presence Post program, and senior leader initiatives, such as TechCamps and the Virtual Student Foreign Service. These DID projects, along with others, are detailed later in the report.

Three teams were informally established in December 2010 within DID to bring some order to the work. However, the arrangement is still described as an experiment. As discussed later in the report, eDiplomacy has no formalized team structure within DID. To address this matter, the OIG team makes recommendations in the main DID section of this report .

### ***Customer Liaison Division***

CLD was established to provide a single point of contact to facilitate the resolution of customer service issues between bureau customers and IRM support groups and to help coordinate IRM resources to fulfill bureau information technology requirements. CLD staff members handle all IRM customer issues and resolve information technology support matters for customers. CLD is also separated into three branches: Domestic, Regional, and External Affairs.

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<sup>1</sup>A Report for the Department of State – IRM Organization Alignment Initiative Change Management Plan, January 2, 2008.

CLD's current organizational placement in eDiplomacy does not afford it any advantages. CLD was merged with eDiplomacy in an effort to colocate personnel "with an up close view of the Department's [information technology] pain points" with those who develop and launch innovative and intuitive tools to solve those problems." The intent was to achieve a synergistic effect, whereby CLD liaisons, through their interactions with customers, observe and gather requirements that could be brought to DID's attention for quick development of an innovative solution. However, in 18 months it has not happened, there is no indication that it will happen, and there is no plan to make it happen. Not one case was brought to the OIG team's attention in which DID development activities resulted from CLD customer interaction. In fact, such an outcome may not be realistic, as the work of the liaisons typically deals with operational issues such as hardware and bandwidth, not the type of innovative applications for diplomats that DID is supposed to develop. This is confirmed by the liaisons themselves, who universally stated that they interact more on a daily basis with IRM operations staff than with DID staff.

The reorganization has received a mixed reception among CLD staff members, with the majority opinion being that CLD was better off in its previous organizational placement under the Customer Service Office in IRM operations, where it had greater visibility among IRM personnel; a more direct channel to the deputy CIO for operations; and more clout for navigating the bureaucratic channels of IRM. However, others claim that under IRM operations, CLD lacked the independence to be a good customer advocate; the customer service mentality of IRM operations did not suit the liaison function; and, in cases of disputes between the customer and a service provider, the customer would always lose. As CLD does not appear to have lost any ability to collaborate with IRM operations staff and has also gained a measure of independence to better act on behalf of customers, the best place for CLD would be outside IRM operations, but in a position with enhanced visibility. Despite the additional burden that would be placed on the Deputy CIO, the relocation of CLD to BMP would afford it such visibility and improve its leverage within the organization.

**Recommendation 4:** The Bureau of Information Resource Management should relocate the Customer Liaison Division so that it reports directly to the Business Management and Planning Directorate. (Action: IRM)

Although the External Affairs branch may have once performed a simple liaison function with other agencies on technical issues, its work has expanded to include matters that affect cyber security policy issues, international agreements for the United States, and major strategy issues for Department leadership. For example, the External Affairs branch manages interagency coordination on communications and information technology for the Department; negotiates with the Diplomatic Telecommunications Service Program Office; provides support to and coordination/collaboration with the Department of Defense on communications and information technology issues; supplies policy guidance and support on bilateral and multilateral secure communications links in support of the President and the Secretary; represents the CIO in negotiations; and monitors agreements with U.S. foreign affairs agencies as well as with foreign nations and international organizations. The External Affairs branch has saved the Department several hundreds of thousands of dollars by concluding memoranda of agreement to cooperate with other U.S. Government agencies by sharing available bandwidth on telecommunications circuits.

During survey meetings, members of the External Affairs staff demonstrated a significant command of their areas of expertise and seemed to have made considerable contributions to IRM's relationships within the interagency community and to have maintained crucial communications technology relationships with official government representatives from other countries. The External Affairs branch has little day-to-day interaction with eDiplomacy but appears to receive most of its guidance from IRM elements or directly from the CIO. Consequently, it would be more appropriate for the External Affairs branch to be located not in CLD but attached to the Office of the Chief Information Officer, which it currently de facto reports to and serves.

**Recommendation 5:** The Bureau of Information Resource Management should relocate the External Affairs branch from the Office of eDiplomacy to the Office of the Chief Information Officer. (Action: IRM)

### Staffing

EDiplomacy began in 2002 with fewer than six staff members and maintained this staffing level until 2009, when tremendous office growth occurred, including the addition of CLD. EDiplomacy leadership has also significantly increased DID staffing with full-time-equivalent employees, contractors, and a variety of short-term personnel such as interns, Y-tour personnel (assigned for 1 year), and people with medical or other temporary assignment delays. CLD staffing has remained relatively constant despite the turmoil of IT Consolidation.<sup>2</sup> The current (May 2, 2011) staffing pattern provided by the Bureau of Human Resources shows eDiplomacy with 99 positions (60 in CLD) encumbered by 75 full- and part-time employees plus 17 full- and part-time contractors.

This rapid and relatively unstrategic reorganization of and growth in eDiplomacy has had two consequences. First, office leadership has avoided making hard decisions about whether DID should accept new tasks or continue to support already proven innovations. Unconstrained by staffing limits, DID always seems to have staff available to pick up an existing project or take on a new one. Second, DID is continually hiring temporary staff members who rely on permanent staff for training and assistance with logistical matters but who then leave after only a few weeks or months. This continual influx of new employees, welcomed and even sought by leadership, places considerable burden on the stable part of eDiplomacy's workforce. This heavy reliance on temporary staff is also disruptive to operations because permanent employees do not know the skills or backgrounds of new employees and thus are not sure how best to incorporate them into existing projects or to leverage their talents throughout the office's portfolio.

In the absence of fully developed performance and output metrics, it is difficult to judge whether eDiplomacy staffing levels are adequate or excessive. However, it seems clear that staff growth in recent years has been opportunistic rather than strategic.

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<sup>2</sup> On July 18, 2007, the former Secretary of State announced the decision to consolidate the Department's desktop computer services and support under IRM to allow for an optimized and cost-effective IT infrastructure that supports agency missions and customer-centric services.

**Recommendation 6:** The Office of eDiplomacy should conduct an analysis of its staffing levels to determine those sufficient for supporting core functions and sustainable projects. (Action: eDiplomacy)

eDiplomacy does not have one primary individual handling management and administrative functions such as staff orientation, space allocation, budget and funding, check-in and check-out procedures, equipment needs, position descriptions and inventory, and other general services duties. During the inspection, a Y-tour individual was responsible for these matters and, according to staff members, was filling a void within the office. However, that individual has since left eDiplomacy, resulting in the interim distribution of such responsibilities among the leads for the DiploTech and Policy and Outreach teams. Office management is aware of the problem and has identified several possible solutions, including designating the responsibilities to newly arrived Y-tour personnel or waiting for the next rotation cycle of Foreign Service officers and filling the position with a management cone specialist. The OIG team advised eDiplomacy management of the merits of having a permanent individual to provide needed stability to an office with constant staff turnover.

**Recommendation 7:** The Office of eDiplomacy, in coordination with the Bureau of Administration's Executive Office, should designate one permanent individual to handle management and administrative functions for the office and rewrite that individual's position description to reflect those duties. (Action: eDiplomacy, in coordination with A/EX)

As mentioned previously, one of the key elements handled by the Y-tour employee was eDiplomacy's orientation program. Because the office is fast paced and has numerous projects in play at any given time, it is imperative that new employees get up to speed quickly. However, numerous staff members noted that an orientation program was either absent or insufficient. Some employees, however, felt their orientation was proactive and thorough. This inconsistency needs to be addressed so that all new eDiplomacy employees get a strong start and add value to projects immediately.

**Recommendation 8:** The Office of eDiplomacy, in coordination with the Bureau of Administration's Executive Office, should develop a thorough orientation program for new employees that covers office structure, operations, and projects and that integrates those employees into existing team structures. (Action: eDiplomacy, in coordination with A/EX)

Although the evaluation of the administrative support services provided by the Executive Office of the Bureau of Administration is outside the scope of this inspection, the OIG team has made several recommendations on shortcomings of administrative services.<sup>3</sup> Collectively, these recommendations culminate the need described earlier to have one primary individual handling management and administrative functions for eDiplomacy. In 2006, as part of a Center of Excellence initiative to colocate these very management and administrative services, the Bureau of Administration took over the Executive Office functions of IRM. The need to have some of these functions returned to an IRM office suggests that the Center of Excellence model may not have worked as intended.

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<sup>3</sup> See Recommendations 7, 8, 11, 12, 15, and 28 of this report.

## Performance Measures

eDiplomacy lacks officewide performance measures. CLD and DID have neither fully defined "success" nor consistently developed measures (output and outcome) to enable them to effectively demonstrate the value of their programs. This approach is inconsistent with the Department's official evaluation policy, which states that "...evaluation is a key aspect of program management, and a robust, coordinated evaluation function is essential to our ability to document program impact, identify best practices, help assess return on investment, provide inputs for policy and planning decisions, and assure performance and accountability for the American people."<sup>4</sup> The eDiplomacy staff noted repeatedly that developing performance measures for diplomatic activities and innovation is difficult. Although agreeing to a point, the OIG team noted that much of eDiplomacy's technology-based, computer-managed activity lends itself especially well to measurement and that one must first define success in order to measure it. To quote Lewis Carroll, "If you do not know where you are going, any road will take you there."

Although eDiplomacy tracks basic output metrics for some of its products and services, the office neither measures outcomes and results nor links them to organizational goals and objectives. As a consequence, eDiplomacy cannot effectively demonstrate the impact of its projects and services on Department operations, which, in turn, hinders the office in numerous ways. CLD and DID are not able to accurately evaluate resource requirements or the efficiency and effectiveness of their operations. Additionally, when demand for products and services exceeds available resources, the absence of performance measures makes it difficult to conduct cost-benefit or tradeoff analyses. Further, as will be pointed out later in this report, information is not collected that would help eDiplomacy determine when a product has fulfilled its mission and should be retired to free resources for other endeavors.

The ramifications of this weakness are significant for the office. Specific findings regarding performance measurement are discussed in greater detail within the main DID and CLD sections of the report.

## Outreach

eDiplomacy has excelled in calling public attention to DID achievements. Few Department offices can footnote their internal Web page with 17 or more published articles in national and niche media with titles like "Who Needs Cables? A Wiki for Diplomats" or "State Department Moves Ahead with Facebook-style Site." eDiplomacy's headline quotient causes some in the Department to take umbrage at the attention received from national media such as the *Huffington Post*, *Wired*, and the *New York Times*. That said, the inspectors judge that the Department's reputation in Washington technology circles has improved since 2002, when the Department was routinely scorned for its dependence on outdated systems and reluctance to embrace the Internet. To some degree, this improvement is due to articles in the mainstream media about eDiplomacy and the introduction of social media tools.

Yet, despite a steady pursuit of outside validation, eDiplomacy lacks a strategic approach to marketing its innovations within the Department. There is no comprehensive plan for reaching

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<sup>4</sup> Department Notice 2010\_11\_154;, dated November 23, 2010.

out to users with technology solutions. During the inspection, the office launched a new professional networking platform called Corridor. The Corridor communications rollout documentation listed a few immediate activities, including a video by the Secretary introducing Corridor to Department employees; however, more could be done for other eDiplomacy products. Even with well-established eDiplomacy products such as Diplopedia, eDiplomacy needs to think of its market as a dynamic audience that must be addressed anew each day.

Providing business advice to customers is inherent to CLD's work and a major component of DID's. Through daily contact with bureau information management professionals and users, CLD staff has constant opportunities not only to seek IRM solutions but also to advise customers on available applications and technology solutions. DID has had significant success in advising EUR's Southeastern Europe office about work process organization and collaboration and has won praise for helping the Bureau of Human Resources with process management for the Combined Federal Campaign. Yet eDiplomacy does not have an officewide, robust outreach strategy designed to make this "business advising" service and other accomplishments better known to users in Washington and abroad.

**Recommendation 9:** The Office of eDiplomacy should develop a general outreach plan based on its overall goals, objectives, and services. This plan should include, at a minimum, marketing strategies that are tied to success indicators for each individual project and service. (Action: eDiplomacy)

### Security Controls

eDiplomacy staff members who perform ISSO responsibilities do not have the required ISSO designation letters. As a consequence of IT Consolidation, eDiplomacy is responsible for handling out-of-scope<sup>5</sup> ISSO functions for all of its Web applications. These functions include handling certification and accreditation, systems maintenance, and physical security of office-specific applications and systems. In accordance with *Foreign Affairs Manual* standard 12 FAM 622.1-1 a., an ISSO and alternate ISSO must be designated in writing to manage the information systems security program. A designation letter will ensure that the appropriate individuals are adequately recognized by eDiplomacy and the Department as having the responsibility to maintain and perform needed information security functions.

**Recommendation 10:** The Office of eDiplomacy should obtain formal designation letters for their assigned information systems security officers. (Action: eDiplomacy)

eDiplomacy also does not have sufficient control over expendable supplies and is spending seemingly excessive amounts on items such as toner cartridges and photo paper. However, because supplies are purchased on an as-needed basis, there is insufficient information to determine appropriate spending levels. The office is considering a software package to streamline these purchase activities. Stronger controls over supply procurement and storage would facilitate better expense control.

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<sup>5</sup> Out-of-scope areas are those identified by the IT Consolidation Program Office as remaining the responsibility of the consolidated bureau to perform and manage.

**Recommendation 11:** The Office of eDiplomacy, in coordination with the Bureau of Administration's Executive Office, should establish controls over supply procurement and storage. (Action: eDiplomacy, in coordination with A/EX)

### **Funding Request Process**

DID does not have a defined and enforced funding request process owing in part to the incomplete merger of CLD with eDiplomacy. Staff members often request quick turnarounds, sometimes as little as 1 week, for travel funding authorizations for events and conferences, even though a normal funding request takes approximately 3 weeks to receive the appropriate clearance and approval from the Department. Despite eDiplomacy management's efforts to explain the proper procedure during staff meetings, requests for expedited service continue. The absence of a standardized funding request procedure not only creates an unnecessary burden for financial management staff but also may result in insufficient documentation to support office travel expenses and the possible over allocation of funds.

**Recommendation 12:** The Office of eDiplomacy, in coordination with the Bureau of Administration's Executive Office, should define and enforce a funding approval process to be used for all travel requests. (Action: eDiplomacy, in coordination with A/EX)

## Diplomatic Innovation Division

As mentioned earlier in the report, the original eDiplomacy office became what is now the DID portion of eDiplomacy. Known within eDiplomacy as the user advocate for diplomats, analysts, managers, and locally employed staff, DID helps users to improve their ability to access, contribute, and share knowledge. It implements and manages a wide array of projects and services for eDiplomacy, including many innovative ideas from the Secretary. Three teams have been informally established within DID: DiploTech, Knowledge Leadership, and Policy and Outreach. Each makes its own contribution to eDiplomacy's overall mission.

### Diplomatic Innovation Division Teams

#### *DiploTech Team*

DID's DiploTech team is heavily involved in supporting initiatives begun by the Secretary of State, including Civil Society 2.0 and Virtual Student Foreign Service programs. The team coordinates on a regular basis with internal and external entities, including nongovernment organizations, Federal government agencies, private industry, and Department bureaus and posts.

The DiploTech team is composed of 12 individuals with diverse backgrounds, including Civil Service and Foreign Service full-time staff, intermittent personnel (Franklin Fellows, Y-tour staff, and interns) and contractors. Similar to other elements within eDiplomacy, the DiploTech team has high morale, and its members are energetic and enthusiastic about their projects.

The DiploTech team is led by a veteran Department employee who has served in management at a variety of levels. The depth of knowledge and skills the team lead brings to the DiploTech team is remarkable. In addition to handling team matters, the lead also oversees the budget and funding, performs out-of-scope ISSO responsibilities, and manages the staffing patterns for eDiplomacy.

The FY 2011 goals and objectives for the DiploTech team's work are still in draft form and thus incomplete. As currently drafted, the goals and objectives lack adequate specificity and alignment with overarching eDiplomacy mission and goals, which themselves need revision. (See Recommendations 1 and 2.) DiploTech team members acknowledge that the document needs refinement but also note that the lack of guidance from eDiplomacy management on the proper format and structure has contributed to the incomplete identification and documentation of DiploTech's team goals and objectives.

In accordance with the *Foreign Affairs Handbook* standard 3 FAH-2 H-122.1, a supervisor should define long-range, intermediate, and short-range goals; establish principles that all actions must follow; develop detailed plans of action to achieve goals; and outline steps to accomplish stated tasks. Proper guidance from management will facilitate the completion of well-defined team goals and objectives and focus DiploTech team efforts and projects so that they are in line with eDiplomacy's overall mission. See the Executive Direction section of this report for a recommendation on officewide goals and objectives.

The DiploTech team lead does not provide continuous and consistent feedback to team members. Although this hands-off management style has allowed members to be innovative and creative and indicates the level of trust the leader has in his team, it also has negative effects. For example, a team member has engaged in outreach activities with other Department offices on eDiplomacy efforts, including the development of a platform tool, that have yet to be reviewed or critiqued by the DiploTech team lead. Additionally, team members working on a particular project have approached management for additional team resources without informing the team lead of their recent event outcomes and presenting their justification for additional staff. Further, the OIG team observed a conference call between a project team and an external project partner in which the project team members and eDiplomacy management spent considerable time discussing project milestones, which should have occurred much earlier in the process.

Per 3 FAH-2 H-124.4 E. (2) and 3 FAH-2 H-125.5 a., a supervisor should give employees frequent feedback so that employees are aware of what they are doing, praising and encouraging them in their efforts and noticing deficiencies for discussions. The OIG team understands that many of the DiploTech team members do not directly report to the team lead under the current team structure; however, the management and completion of DiploTech projects fall under the responsibility of the DiploTech team lead. As such, continuous and consistent feedback with team members on project status will provide all parties with the assurance that the team's goals and objectives are being met, not only for the DiploTech team but throughout DID.

***Informal Recommendation 1:*** The Office of eDiplomacy should counsel Diplomatic Innovation Division team leaders to provide continuous and consistent feedback to their employees on projects and initiatives.

### ***Knowledge Leadership Team***

The Knowledge Leadership (KL) team focuses on the core eDiplomacy mandate to foster knowledge management at the Department. The Department's highly mobile and dispersed workforce benefits from tools that facilitate information sharing, knowledge transfer, and long-distance collaboration. Several of eDiplomacy's cornerstone products—Diplopedia, Communities@State, iNet Search, and the newly launched Corridor—address these needs and are managed by the KL team.

The KL team's morale is quite high, and team leadership is strong. The staff members like what they do and the people with whom they work. They believe in the eDiplomacy mission and are dedicated to providing innovative, yet functional, knowledge management tools to the Department. Collaboration and cooperation are hallmarks of the team. Although each team member has primary areas of responsibility, they all contribute to team projects and pitch in where needed.

Compared to DID overall, staffing on the KL team is relatively stable. It currently consists of one Civil Service employee serving as team coordinator, one Y-tour entry-level Foreign Service officer, a Foreign Service office management specialist, and nine contractors. The skill sets of the office are divided between technical staff and those engaged in user support, content development, and community outreach/engagement. The technical staff also serves as a resource for other DID teams, which can complicate resource allocation and management. Later

in this report, the OIG team addresses the need for consistent project management to address issues related to resource allocation.

The KL team has made a solid effort to document work objectives and activities, but has been hindered by the absence of an FY 2011 office-level goals and objectives framework. This absence seems to have led to the omission of team-level goals and periodic confusion between objectives and activities. This issue must be addressed in order to develop a workable performance measurement plan (see Recommendation 17). That said, the inspectors were impressed that the team linked all of its activities and objectives to goals and objectives in the IT Consolidation and Department strategic plans, thereby demonstrating an awareness of the role of the team and its activities within the larger organization that it supports.

Although the KL team is responsible for providing, managing, and evaluating the utility of knowledge products and services used Departmentwide, the vast majority of the team has spent little or no time in the field. Team members attempt to compensate by using other means (surveys, telephone, email consultations, etc.) to establish relationships with colleagues in the field; however, they have a limited first-hand understanding of embassy operations, information needs, and the use of knowledge management tools in the field. This knowledge deficit somewhat limits the team's ability to tailor knowledge solutions to field needs. It also hinders outreach efforts related to eDiplomacy products and services. Identifying real-life business challenges and determining which eDiplomacy products can be used to meet them will not only enable eDiplomacy to serve its customer base better but will also allow eDiplomacy to share solutions among customers and subsequently promulgate best practices throughout the Department.

Over the past 2 years, only three team members have traveled to conferences outside the United States. The overseas activities of these individuals illustrate the potential value of teams spending more time in the field. The Wikimania Conference in Gdansk, Poland, provided opportunities for two team members to combine conference attendance with site visits and consultations with Embassies Stockholm and Tallinn. While they were in the field, team members conducted outreach and training activities related to KL team products; worked with post on specific projects that improved use of KL tools; gathered knowledge management and social media best practices to share with other posts; and, under the sponsorship of the public affairs section, met with local government and technology sector representatives to discuss knowledge management and social media issues. An Advanced Learning Institute conference on Social Media and Government in Ottawa, Canada, provided another team member with the opportunity to engage officials of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada (formerly Canada's Department of External Affairs) and share with them lessons learned and best practices for using social media tools to meet their organizational goals and objectives.

***Informal Recommendation 2:*** The Office of eDiplomacy should identify and support travel opportunities for staff that maximize return on investment by combining conference attendance and presentations with outreach and evaluation activities at overseas posts.

The KL team has identified and is tracking a wide variety of metrics for its products. Output measures have been identified and, for the most part, are being tracked and reported. These measures, along with informal surveys conducted by the OIG team, indicate wide usage of

and appreciation for the KL team's knowledge management tools within the Department. However, current measures focus more on outputs than on longer term outcomes and results. EDiplomacy notes that knowledge management programs are fairly easy to measure in terms of activity; however, every peer organization, both in the government and the private sector, that eDiplomacy has benchmarked against has had difficulty determining outcomes, because so much of what knowledge management must accomplish occurs at the local level. There are currently no clear, systematically collected measures of the impact of these products on Department operations. The KL team could improve these measurements by formalizing the collection of anecdotal evidence to support outcomes.

The KL team is launching a new analytics initiative that will build on and improve current performance measurement efforts by providing consistent and systematic analysis of usage data across projects. The KL team anticipates that the initiative will improve the quality and efficiency of data gathering and analysis and will allow the focus of more attention on outcomes and results. Initially, four projects will be included in the initiative—Diplopedia, Communities@State, Enterprise Search, and Corridor. Ultimately, any of DID's Internet-based projects could be included.

As envisioned, the analytics initiative will provide consolidated output measures such as the number of articles and edits in Diplopedia; the number of community subscribers, entries, and comments for communities in the Communities@State program; and the number of profiles, visitors, connections, and groups in Corridor. Additionally, the initiative will identify the geographic location of all users and provide historical data on each measure, which will enable trend analysis.

As noted in the Executive Direction section of this report, outcomes and results are critical to evaluating program success and value to the Department. A recommendation related to officewide performance measurement is included in the Project Management Methodology section of this report.

### ***Policy and Outreach Team***

The Policy and Outreach (P&O) team lists the following among its goals: improve customers' understanding and perception of IRM and its services; increase awareness of social media as tools for diplomacy; promote adoption of these tools as an integral part of the formulation of foreign policy and management of the Department; and continue to support the development of innovative technology and work to change the institutional barriers to its adoption.

A Foreign Service officer leads the team of one Civil Service employee, two full-time Foreign Service officers, a Foreign Service information management specialist, six contractors (including two former management-cone Foreign Service officers) and one part-time retired Foreign Service officer. All team members expressed enthusiasm for their work and morale is high. Members bring different skills and experience to the job, but, because of their widely different backgrounds, they sometimes do not integrate their work fully with fellow team members. This problem may be due to the confusion about priorities in eDiplomacy as a whole.

Several P&O team projects are well under way. One example is the SharePoint Users Group, for which eDiplomacy organized, in coordination with IRM's System Integration Office and the Foreign Service Institute, a very successful Departmentwide conference, with some posts participating by video. Even though the removal of institutional barriers is among the team's goals, some projects, such as access to desktop video conferencing, have lagged due to bureaucratic obstacles. It was unclear to OIG inspectors why the team stopped pressing forward to complete a project that is close to success and a high Department priority. The Virtual Presence Posts project also seems to be dormant, now that some posts have either dropped the original static Web sites, focused on strategic personal contacts, and/or moved on to other, more interactive technologies, such as Facebook. The root of these inconsistencies in focusing on goals and objectives points to a lack of direction from eDiplomacy management regarding priorities and resource management

The team is working on developing training modules for eDiplomacy products and has managed to include briefings on eDiplomacy products in some Foreign Service Institute training courses. For example, the inspector observed DID team members give a concise, focused presentation at the Foreign Service Institute to a class of new Foreign Service officers, using information highlighting specifically those products that would be useful and relevant for beginning Foreign Service officers.

The P&O team lead is in the process of training some team members to be business practice advisors for offices and posts. They have already started a pilot program with EUR's Southeastern Europe office to help desk officers use collaborative knowledge management tools to organize and streamline their work. This initiative has the potential to be a very useful addition to eDiplomacy's mission, as long as the business practice advisors are well versed in applying the technical tools. See the Diplomatic Innovation Division Products and Services section for a more detailed discussion of this project.

The P&O team currently has a public affairs officer whose role does not fit within eDiplomacy. This officer spends the vast majority of his time consumed by daily contact with the IRM front office and managing public affairs for all of IRM. Although not officially reporting directly to the CIO, the public affairs officer consults with the CIO on a regular basis and assists with public appearances, logistics preparations, and event attendance. Additionally, the public affairs officer handles other duties, including the drafting, coordinating, and clearing of press guidance for IRM, as well as liaison with the Bureau of Public Affairs. Ideally, the public affairs officer plays an integral role in communicating the CIO's vision to IRM staff, the Department, and beyond. Based on the level of work performed by the public affairs officer, the position would be better aligned with and more effectively serve IRM if it were relocated to the CIO's front office.

**Recommendation 13:** The Bureau of Information Resource Management should rewrite the public affairs officer's position description so that this officer reports directly to the chief information officer. (Action: IRM)

## **Team Structure**

With the rapid growth of DID came the need for a more workable structure, which led to an informal organization of DID personnel into the three aforementioned teams: DiploTech,

Knowledge Leadership, and Policy and Outreach. DID employees often work collaboratively across the team structure, which they feel adds clarity and direction to their work. The present team structure has not been formalized, however, causing some team members to complain of uncertainty in terms of their reporting structure and alignment within the office. A formalized team structure will empower team leaders with more direction and provide the employees with proper feedback.

**Recommendation 14:** The Office of eDiplomacy, in coordination with the Bureau of Administration's Executive Office, should formalize the Diplomatic Innovation Division team structure to include clear supervisory lines. (Action: eDiplomacy, in coordination with A/EX)

Additionally, only one of the three designated team leaders holds a supervisory management position. Because of this inconsistency, not all team members report directly to their team leaders, as their direct supervisors may be elsewhere within eDiplomacy management. This arrangement has led to issues with project priorities, internal communication and feedback, and resource allocation.

**Recommendation 15:** The Office of eDiplomacy, in coordination with the Bureau of Administration's Executive Office, should develop position descriptions for team leaders to formalize management and oversight responsibilities and make position grades commensurate with their duties. (Action: eDiplomacy, in coordination with A/EX)

### **Project Management Methodology**

DID has not incorporated a project management methodology into its projects and initiatives. Specifically, the division does not uniformly use appropriate project management techniques to ensure that potential projects are appropriately assessed, prioritized, planned, implemented, and evaluated. The formal processes used in DID for project selection, development, and implementation are inconsistent at best and nonexistent at worst.

DID is known for its ability to innovate and respond to short-turnaround taskings from the highest levels of the Department.<sup>6</sup> eDiplomacy's director identifies opportunities to address larger Department needs and volunteers to take on new initiatives. As new mandates and opportunities arise, however, they are not clearly planned, managed and prioritized. For example, eDiplomacy management does not review its projects portfolio to determine trade-offs when new projects are added. Staff is uncertain whether a new idea is just that or whether it will become a major new office initiative. This lack of a strategic approach puts the staff at an obvious disadvantage of not knowing what the office's priorities are, how or when they might change, and whether staff work is clearly meeting the most important needs of the Department. Also absent are open communication and transparent decisionmaking regarding project prioritization and resourcing.

To address this problem, DID needs to implement a systematic approach to project initiation and management that conforms to the standards outlined in 5 FAM 620 Information Technology Project Management and 5 FAH-5 H-200 Project Management. According to these

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<sup>6</sup> For example, in response to a mandate from the Secretary, eDiplomacy worked with the Executive Secretariat to launch the Sounding Board in 2 days.

standards, DID's methodology should incorporate key project management elements, including performing a cost benefit analysis; identifying user, system and business requirements; identifying already existing alternatives; confirming key stakeholders; determining appropriate control gates for management review and approval; and developing pertinent project documentation. A well-defined project management methodology will foster the development of projects that are in line with overall management and office goals and objectives.

Performance measurement is a key aspect of project management. At the outset of a project, DID needs to define project objectives and how to measure project results. Project measures cannot be limited to outputs but should include longer term desired outcomes. DID must be able to assess the impact of a project on the Department and its operations in order to determine the project's continued viability and value. The OIG team did not find established performance measures for some DID projects. In many cases, eDiplomacy staff has not defined success in accord with its mission statement and has not translated that concept into key performance indicators for each project and product. It is difficult even to begin to measure success if the project managers and supervisors have not insisted on defining what constitutes success.

The OIG team observed several examples of limited performance measures. For example, Diplopedia, the online employee-written encyclopedia of Department information, is one of the highest profile accomplishments for this office. Although eDiplomacy staff members are able to report how many pages Diplopedia contains, what pages are viewed most frequently, and how often pages are edited, they are unable to say much about how Diplopedia is used, where users come from, or the relative value users derive from Diplopedia articles. As another example, Tech@State conferences attract a vast number of participants and amount of press attention, but the OIG team could not find any other measures of success or evaluation of the impact these events have on the Department.

Without a defined and implemented project management methodology, DID team members are also experiencing difficulty in determining their work priorities. EDiplomacy management's willingness to accept all tasks and volunteer staff for more, making the most recent assignment the highest priority, has begun to strain staff resources. Although some tasks are intrinsically more important than others, many fall to eDiplomacy simply because no one else is willing to take on the idea. Many DID employees expressed having difficulty in planning or measuring work output; others describe themselves as confused or, in some cases, simply lacking direction about what IRM and eDiplomacy management want them to do next or wondering whether what they are doing matters. Team leaders and members noted management's inadequate communication of eDiplomacy's priorities. A project management methodology should help address this issue for DID staff and bring some direction to management decisions.

The ownership of projects is another element that needs to be considered by eDiplomacy management, and a project management methodology will assist the office in making such determinations. As part of the planning process, DID should determine whether it will maintain operational responsibility for projects or whether it is more appropriate to turn over operations to another element within IRM or the Department. DID's mandate to foster knowledge management may make it the natural business owner for enterprisewide knowledge management tools, but there may be other programs that should be transitioned to more appropriate business

owners. (See the Virtual Student Foreign Service section for further discussion.) All systems eventually reach the end of their usefulness. Sometimes this is because newer technologies are better suited to perform the same or similar functions or because the needs of the organization change. At other times it can be because the project does not achieve intended results. Plans for all DID projects should address what factors will be used to determine when the project lifecycle's end point has been reached.

When adopting a project management methodology, it is important for DID to remember that project management techniques can be scaled and tailored to fit the specific nature of a project and its sponsoring organization. Use of a standardized project management methodology is not the death knell for agility and innovation. Project management tools and processes will help DID manage its vast array of initiatives, appropriately allocate and oversee resources, and measure project performance.

**Recommendation 16:** The Office of eDiplomacy should implement a scalable project management methodology that is consistent with Managing State Projects for all Diplomatic Innovation Division projects, paying specific attention to elements related to project initiation, prioritization, and operations phase ownership. (Action: eDiplomacy)

**Recommendation 17:** The Office of eDiplomacy should develop and implement a performance measurement plan for Diplomatic Innovation Division projects that clearly articulates project goals and objectives and identifies output and outcome measures for assessing and reporting project results. (Action: eDiplomacy)

### **Diplomatic Innovation Division Projects and Services**

DID staff is involved in a wide range of office projects and innovative ideas. Many of these projects were conceptualized by the Secretary of State, with eDiplomacy taking ownership to bring these thoughts to fruition. At the time of the inspection, DID was shown to be engaged in more than 40 initiatives. The OIG team focused on a number of these, which are explained further below.

#### ***Business Practice Advisors***

The DID P&O team is currently developing a service that uses team members as business practice advisors who consult with users in Department offices on how to employ knowledge management tools to streamline and organize workflow. For example, the P&O team worked closely with EUR's Southeastern Europe office to develop a classified SharePoint site as a pilot program for organizing tasks, tracking deadlines, and storing documents for easy internal collaboration. Shifting the whole office to a SharePoint system required commitment from senior office management to devote considerable time and effort to changing work processes. Although still in its inception, the new program seems to have directed processes and workflows and provided a more efficient way to track tasks and share documents. The DID team invested a great deal of effort in developing this system for the EUR Southeastern Europe office but hopes to employ it as a model that can be adapted for regional bureau desks and other Department offices. DID has not yet devised a project plan or milestones to market this new service. (See the Outreach section for a discussion of and OIG team recommendation for eDiplomacy's outreach strategy.)

## *Civil Society 2.0*

The Department launched Civil Society 2.0 in November 2009 to support the Secretary of State's vision for an initiative to connect organizations with technology-based tools and volunteers in order to help raise digital literacy and increase the impact of civil society organizations in the 21st century. Civil Society 2.0 uses connection technologies such as mobile, Web, and social software. Civil Society 2.0 includes two programs—TechCamp and Tech@State. TechCamp is a 1- to 2-day event for hands on, interactive, and educational training for civil society groups to learn how to use and integrate tech-based tools into their work. Tech@State focuses on connecting established leaders, new innovators, government personnel, and others to work together on technology solutions to advance diplomacy and development as well as improve the education, health, and welfare of the world's population.

The project team has drafted a business model and metric approach for TechCamp events. The business model provides a description of how to prepare and administer such events and identifies three phases that must occur for a successful event: engage the relevant stakeholders, execute the conference, and enable the extended conversation. According to the project team, the intent is for the business model to be robust enough for any organization to adopt, in case TechCamps do not remain a focus of the Department. The draft metrics approach for TechCamps outlines a number of ways to evaluate the success of the program. These include pre- and post-event surveys as well as sponsor funding and engagement in events. The implementation of problem definitions is another success rating factor, in which the goal is to have at least 10 percent of the problem definitions make a significant difference for affected parties. The project team for Tech@State has, on the other hand, not developed any specific business model or performance measures for administering the program.

During the course of the inspection, eDiplomacy held a TechCamp in Jakarta, Indonesia, and a Tech@State event in Washington, DC. According to event post reports, the TechCamp brought together more than 50 civil society representatives from across Indonesia to learn from one another's experiences about natural disasters and climate change and to discuss how technology and social media can enhance their ability to improve communities. The event resulted in the collection of more than 20 success stories, which the project team viewed as a measure of success. The Tech@State event in Washington, DC, entitled Serious Games, brought together more than 200 attendees and centered on how gaming could be used from the perspective of psychology, business and design characteristics, education and social change, and military and government situations. However, eDiplomacy did not have specific success measures for this event and stated that such measures would depend in the subjective judgment of the attendees. See the Project Management Methodology section for an overall recommendation regarding performance measures.

## *Collaboration Clearinghouse*

Collaboration Clearinghouse is a process accessed through an Intranet portal that is intended to help users determine which internal collaboration tool addresses their needs. The portal features a questionnaire for users to specify their particular knowledge management needs. The completed questionnaire is sent directly to the Collaboration Clearinghouse Working Group, consisting of two persons from the DID team and two persons from the IRM Systems and Integration Office, who confer and assign requests to the appropriate IRM office. The portal,

however, posts a chart of “knowledge tools” that is too general and elementary to be of much use. Also, DID could not explain how a user would know to contact the Collaboration Clearinghouse for assistance. Unless DID advertises the Collaboration Clearinghouse broadly and convinces users that it is a useful service, users will continue to contact eDiplomacy or IRM directly, where it may be difficult to find the right office to determine the most appropriate product or service desired. The most practical solution would be for DID to develop a series of business models or case studies to help determine which tool suits which task. (See further discussion in the Consulting and Product Integration section.)

**Recommendation 18:** The Office of eDiplomacy, in coordination with the Bureau of Information Resource Management, should eliminate the Collaboration Clearinghouse and replace it with appropriate business models and consulting services for the Department of State. (Action: eDiplomacy, in coordination with IRM)

### *Communities@State*

Created in 2005, Communities@State enables Department employees to create communities of interest and practice to share knowledge and stay connected. Communities can be hosted either on OpenNet or the Department’s extranet (facing Intelink), which extends membership to interagency partners. EDiplomacy is in the process of changing the software that supports Communities@State, which will expand the ability of individual community administrators to change and manage their communities. EDiplomacy currently supports 100 deployed communities, of which 84 are considered active. There are 15 new communities pending or under development. Although eDiplomacy tracks basic Communities@State metrics, such as the number of communities, entries, comments, and page views, the responsibility for evaluating the success of individual communities rests with the community administrator. Given the varying goals and objectives of each community, this practice somewhat hampers eDiplomacy’s ability to measure the value of the Communities@State program overall.

As already noted, it is important for eDiplomacy to measure the value of its products and tools and to determine those that are of continuing importance to the Department. As eDiplomacy adds new social media tools to its portfolio, others may lose relevance. For example, the newly launched professional network Corridor includes the ability to create groups and discussion forums. If Corridor membership grows, Department employees may prefer to use Corridor instead of Communities@State. EDiplomacy must evaluate the impact and value of each tool to determine whether they are complementary or whether the future success of Corridor could significantly reduce participation in Communities@State. If the tools are complementary, it is important for eDiplomacy to articulate the preferred uses of each tool and/or how both can be integrated to address community/group needs. Performance measurement and product integration are addressed in the Project Management Methodology and the Consulting and Product Integration sections, respectively.

### *Corridor*

Corridor, a professional internal Department networking site, was approved by the Information Technology Change Control Board in May 2011. Corridor was launched with a low-key effort on May 20, 2011, at the Department and later at the Foreign Service Institute and is now available to all employees with an OpenNet account. At the close of its beta test phase,

Corridor had 1,000 members, which quickly doubled to more than 2,000 during the first week after its launch and expanded to more than 3,000 members by the third week.

Corridor is modeled as an internal Department site, similar to Facebook. Membership is voluntary, and the amount of personal and professional information (such as prior posts, languages, and areas of expertise) that members post is left to the discretion of the members as long as they follow the terms of use. Members may use Corridor as a means to connect with colleagues socially or informally, as a mechanism for professional communication. Practical uses could include activities such as Foreign Service bidders seeking contacts at and information about posts or office directors reaching out to bidders with certain geographic experience and language skills. The groups feature could prove to be a more flexible and efficient way of supporting the current Communities@State project. Corridor is too new to evaluate completely, but it appears to have the potential for a variety of practical and professional uses. It will be important to define and measure how Corridor contributes to Department work products and employee productivity and improves Department operations.

### *Diplopedia*

Launched in 2006, Diplopedia is the Department's internal, group-authored encyclopedia. Anyone with access to OpenNet can create a user account to contribute or edit Diplopedia articles. The classified version, Diplopedia-S, serves as the ClassNet browser home page. A read-only version of Diplopedia is available via Intelink. Although eDiplomacy staff contributes numerous articles to Diplopedia and has created Diplopedia-based information portals on popular topics, most of Diplopedia's content is created by individual Department employees. As of May 2011, there were 4,305 registered contributor/editors and more than 13,900 published articles. As a user-populated information compendium, Diplopedia's accuracy, currency, and comprehensiveness hinge on the active participation of Department employees. Whether this is the source of Diplopedia's strength or its great weakness depends entirely on the quality of the information that users provide.

During the course of this inspection, OIG inspectors heard both praise for the tool and for the staff who manage it, as well as frustration over the fact that inaccurate, incomplete, and out-of-date information sometimes appears in Diplopedia. Although the OIG team recognizes that wikis, by their very nature, are community generated and community monitored, there are a few steps that DID can take to mitigate this problem. First, there should be an obvious mechanism for users to report content issues. Users can currently use the Get Help or Diplopedia Assistance links, but it is not clear whether content problems should be reported through them. EDiplomacy has agreed that Diplopedia should include a "Report outdated, inaccurate or incomplete content" link. (This would mimic the Search link "I did not find what I was looking for..."). Second, DID should assign a full-time (or nearly full-time) staff member to serve as the Diplopedia content manager/editor. This person could monitor complaints, create new Diplopedia content when appropriate (see discussion under the Search Engine section), and reach out to subject matter experts to correct and update content that does not meet community standards.

***Informal Recommendation 3:*** The Office of eDiplomacy should provide Diplopedia users with a clear and easy-to-use mechanism for reporting out-of-date, inaccurate, or incomplete content.

**Informal Recommendation 4:** The Office of eDiplomacy should designate a full-time or nearly full-time staff member to serve as the Diplopedia content manager/editor.

### ***Information Technology Innovation Fund***

The IT Innovation Fund was announced in a Departmentwide cable in January 2011. Keeping in line with the Secretary of State's vision for Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review to pursue new ways of doing business, the Department has set aside \$1.5 million from the Central Investment Fund for FY 2011. The funding is allocated to projects proposed by overseas posts and domestic bureaus that showcase well-conceived, high-impact innovation through the use of existing technologies and processes or the development of new ones. Funding is competitively allocated based on a series of request elements, including the anticipated impact, the evaluation and measurement metrics used to define success, and the IRM strategic priorities supported.

Funding decisions are made by a panel of representatives from IRM directorates and offices, as well as the Office of Policy, Planning, and Resources for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs and the Office of the Special Advisor for Innovation and Technology. EDiplomacy administers the program and manages incoming proposals by ensuring the proposals are written clearly and completely. Further, eDiplomacy responds to inquiries from the review panel and requests the disbursement of funds following panel approval.

At the time of the inspection, the panel had met four times, resulting in the approval of five proposals totaling more than \$450,000; an additional proposal for approximately \$59,000 awaits final approval. According to IRM senior management, the \$1.5 million allocated to the fund must be used within the fiscal year, as funds may not be transferred to the next fiscal year.

There is uncertainty regarding whether the IT Innovation Fund will continue into the next fiscal year. However, before a management decision can be made on the future of the Fund, several areas identified by the OIG team need to be addressed. Specifically, IRM senior management and eDiplomacy staff noted a lack of understanding by Department personnel of the intent of the IT Innovation Fund. As a result, the panel receives project proposals that are not adequate for or in line with its purpose for approval. Furthermore, there are no set milestones or performance measures to evaluate program success. IRM senior management has requested that the Project Services Office create a performance measurement framework for the program—something that should have been done in the planning stages. Additionally, no set criterion exists for evaluating and approving project proposals. Proposals are approved or rejected based solely on the professional judgment of the panel members. As noted earlier in the report, only a properly documented and managed project with a detailed outreach strategy can provide sufficient results and benefit for the Department.

**Recommendation 19:** The Bureau of Information Resource Management should develop and disseminate a clear purpose and objectives document for the Information Technology Innovation Fund that includes detailed milestones, performance measures, and approval criterion for project proposals. (Action: IRM)

### *Search Engine*

EDiplomacy provides technical search capabilities for the Department's intranet through the enterprise search engine Autonomy and individualized search support for Department Intranet users. The search tool's main page, iNet Search, provides links and top matches to help users find frequently searched materials quickly. Diplopedia articles, as well as Department Notices and other official Department communications, are weighted in search results. Search performance is monitored and improved by evaluating help requests from the user community, which users submit by clicking the "I did not find what I was looking for" link on the search site. An eDiplomacy staff member evaluates and addresses each submission. Frequent requests for assistance on the same topic spur eDiplomacy staff to create topical information portals on Diplopedia to guide users to the desired content. Data from February 2011 suggest that, on average, Department employees conduct 74,000 searches every week. EDiplomacy staff estimate that it receives an average of 20 requests for search support each week.

Although anecdotal evidence indicates that many Department employees are dissatisfied with iNet Search, eDiplomacy staff believes it is successful and points to the steady increase in its use, the comments received on Search support, and the relatively low number of "I did not find what I was looking for..." complaints. Available analytic data do not permit the OIG team to make a judgment on this point. The KL team is planning several search enhancements to improve the search experience, such as enabling "search agents" to allow users to save searches and exploring the use of semantic Web capabilities to improve and fine-tune search results.

### *SharePoint Users Group*

EDiplomacy created the SharePoint Users Group (SPUG) as a forum for peer-to-peer information sharing and support. SPUG meets monthly and held its first annual departmentwide conference in May 2011. SPUG does not focus on the technical implementation of SharePoint but on the business models for SharePoint use within the Department. SPUG is introducing virtual meetings to broaden participation throughout the Department. The May 2011 SPUG conference included roughly 80 virtual attendees, and the February/March monthly SPUG meeting included attendees from 25 posts.

SPUG is one of three entities that currently provide resources for SharePoint. The second is IRM's Systems and Integration Office, which hosts the majority of Department SharePoint sites. The Systems and Integration Office is the primary provider for all SharePoint services within the Department and provides all technical support for centrally hosted SharePoint sites. The office also hosts SharePoint workshops and provides other information resources. The third entity involved with SharePoint support is the SharePoint Working (SPWG), a grass roots organization formed during the earliest days of SharePoint use at the Department. SPWG, like SPUG, has focused on peer-to-peer information sharing and support. Numerous SPWG members are in the field and host their own SharePoint installations.

A basic level of coordination among these organizations is evident. SPUG publicly defers to the Systems and Integration Office's SharePoint Support site as the primary Department SharePoint resource. SPUG and SPWG use the same SharePoint site to provide information to members. That said, the role that each of these three groups fulfills and how they complement and coordinate with one another is unclear. According to the SPUG site on Diplopedia, plans are

under way to combine the shared SPUG and SPWG information site with the Systems and Integration Office's SharePoint Support site.

**Recommendation 20:** The Office of eDiplomacy, in coordination with the Bureau of Information Resource Management, should consult with representatives of the SharePoint Working Group to clarify and establish a policy on the roles and responsibilities for handling SharePoint-related activities. (Action: eDiplomacy, in coordination with IRM)

### *Virtual Presence Posts*

Virtual Presence Posts (VPP) are targeted outreach coordination tools that are managed and run by posts and designed to extend and coordinate the engagement of the United States in cities far from U.S. embassies or consulates. VPPs use a mix of traditional diplomacy (travel, outreach programs, assistance programs, and cultural exchange) and modern diplomacy (a branded Web site, an electronic communications channel, and a VPP Team) to develop stronger relationships with target audiences. EDiplomacy developed the VPP concept and standard operating procedures, and the Office of International Information Programs designed the Web sites. However, the posts are responsible for VPP implementation, establishing the relationships with the underserved regions or demographic groups and following up with visits and programs that could be publicized on the VPP Web sites.

Although eDiplomacy still claims VPP as a product, many of the links on the VPP intranet site do not work, and many of the VPP Web sites feature updates that are more than 1 year old. For example, of the 43 VPPs listed on the eDiplomacy Web site, 5 are no longer accessible. Only nine sites have entries from 2011, while some have entries only from 2010 or have not been updated since 2009. Furthermore, many sites are duplicates of the respective embassy's internet Web site and have no VPP-specific updates.

To maintain the relationships, many posts have moved from static VPP Web sites to more interactive technology, such as Facebook. According to the OIG's September 2010 inspection report on Beijing:<sup>7</sup> "While the Department's original concept of VPPs emphasized electronic outreach, VPPs in China focus on programs, including visits to schools and universities ... Some VPP coordinators are using electronic media for outreach. Several VPPs have Web pages linked to the Embassy Beijing and Consulate General Guangzhou Web sites. The challenge is to keep these sites current with the limited staff available". Given that eDiplomacy no longer seems to have a role in VPPs, it should not continue to promote VPPs as a current product; however, it could list VPP as a concept originated by eDiplomacy that is now adapted and implemented by others.

**Recommendation 21:** The Office of eDiplomacy should remove the Virtual Presence Post from its listed programs and stop allocating resources to it. (Action: eDiplomacy)

### *Virtual Student Foreign Service*

In May 2009, the Secretary of State introduced the Virtual Student Foreign Service program at a university commencement ceremony. The program encourages "eInternships" by

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<sup>7</sup> OIG Report No. ISP-I-10-79A, *Inspection of Embassy Beijing, China, and Constituent Posts*, September 2010.

virtually connecting U.S. college students with U.S. overseas posts and Department domestic offices to engage in digital diplomacy. The Virtual Student Foreign Service program was coordinated over the summer of 2009 and resulted in a pilot program with 37 posts and approximately 50 former Department interns participating. According to eDiplomacy staff, the program has received over 400 applications for the upcoming cycle and shows signs of growing participation. EDiplomacy staff states that the 2011–2012 program will offer 146 available positions for students to work on 108 projects with 66 overseas posts and 20 domestic offices.

Upon completion of the pilot program, the project manager conducted a survey to determine what worked well and what required improvement. Some of the common problems included incorrect pairings of students and posts, lack of commitment and interest among selected students, and insufficient information provided to posts regarding their interns. Some posts indicated that the students did not meet their project needs nor have the skills necessary for their particular project. To increase the applicant pool and recruit more suitable candidates, the project manager opened the program to all U.S. citizen college students and requested more detailed information from posts regarding specific skills, languages, and equipment knowledge that students should possess. Additionally, the project manager has engaged in more outreach efforts, including publication of articles in the Department magazine and discussing the program during courses at the Foreign Service Institute.

The program manager has also been working on a new effort within the program—microtasking. This new concept is intended to increase the number of college students who are involved with the Department and their contributions by having Department employees identify discrete tasks or projects that can be clearly explained, posted to an external Web site, and completed by any participating college student.

Although the progress made with the program should be recognized, the OIG team questions whether the Virtual Student Foreign Service program would not be better suited elsewhere within the Department to ensure its alignment with other recruitment efforts. The key question is whether the Virtual Student Foreign Service program is a recruitment/employment program or a student exchange program. The answer to this question will best decide the program's place within the Department.

**Recommendation 22:** The Office of eDiplomacy, in coordination with the Office of the Chief Information Officer, should determine which office should have ownership of the Virtual Student Foreign Service program. (Action: eDiplomacy, in coordination with CIO)

### *Consulting and Product Integration*

With so many projects and services under DID's purview, it is a serious challenge for staff to recommend appropriate tools or integrated tool sets to meet specific Department needs. From conversations with and observations of DID staff, the inspectors note the old truism that "where you stand depends on where you sit." Strong feelings exist among some staffers regarding the relative merits of specific DID tools versus the limitations of others. Individuals tend to turn to tools that are most familiar to them and to avoid, or even denigrate, those for which they have a limited working knowledge. A solution-seeking customer could get significantly different information, depending on the DID staffer consulted.

To improve its consulting quality and capacity, DID should develop a series of business models or case studies that reflect common challenges encountered throughout the Department. They can cull these from assistance requests already received or through surveying organizations within the Department. After fleshing out these models and case studies, DID staff should develop a strategy (or conduct an options analysis of various strategies) to address the problem, drawing from the full range of DID tools.

This approach would serve several purposes. All DID business practice advisors could attain a common level of knowledge regarding tool strengths, weaknesses, and functional limitations. DID staff could also explore creative and innovative ways to integrate their tools to meet common business challenges as well as use the business models/case studies and possible solutions in their outreach activities to improve awareness of their tools and how they can be used throughout the Department.

**Recommendation 23:** The Office of eDiplomacy should develop business models and/or case studies of common Department of State challenges and corresponding solutions that utilize a single or integrated set of Diplomatic Innovation Division tools to provide consistent advice to customers and better educate them on the practical and innovative uses of eDiplomacy tools. (Action: eDiplomacy)

## Customer Liaison Division

CLD was established to provide a single point of contact to facilitate the resolution of customer service issues between bureau customers and IRM support groups and to help coordinate IRM resources to fulfill bureau IT requirements. CLD has three branches: Domestic, Regional, and External Affairs. The Domestic branch liaisons are each typically assigned three to five domestic functional bureaus. Domestic liaison activities have been and continue to be influenced by IT Consolidation. Typically, domestic liaisons interface between the out-of-scope IT personnel in the bureau and the service-providing offices of IRM. The Regional branch assigns two to three liaisons to each regional bureau, and they are responsible for liaising with the out-of-scope IT personnel retained by the bureau as well as all with the overseas posts associated with that regional bureau. The External Affairs branch liaises with external groups, including other Federal agencies and even foreign governments. There are also two other distinct functions that operate within CLD: two of the staff members of the domestic branch perform administrative and procurement functions for all IRM offices in State Annex-9, and two members of the regional branch run a rover program for temporary duty support to overseas posts.

CLD performs what many regard as a valuable service for IRM's customers and has numerous anecdotal accounts of how it has interceded on posts' behalf to solve some seemingly intractable problems. However, many of CLD's operations are not well defined, from the roles and responsibilities of liaisons to standard operating procedures and performance measures. Even its placement within IRM, as well as that of some of its subcomponents, seems to defy explanation. Moreover, the ambiguous nature of CLD's operations leaves it unable to address critical issues such as whether it is meeting its organizational mission, whether its liaisons are performing effectively, and whether it is appropriately resourced. Some within the organization even wondered whether CLD's inability to address such questions raise the more important issue of whether it is redundant or outmoded. Each of these issues is addressed in further detail below.

### *Roles and Responsibilities*

CLD liaisons have a difficult time defining what they do. During the course of the inspection, the OIG team heard widely varying descriptions of the role of a liaison. Even those in management positions had difficulty describing their own roles as well as those of the liaison staff. This ambiguity in roles and responsibilities across the division is due to the absence of standard operating procedures or performance measures. Some see strong ties with elements of IRM Operations and follow Remedy trouble tickets closely. Others point out that there are offices in IRM Operations that perform such functions. A few work more closely with DID because they find its projects interesting and volunteer as beta testers for applications. There is no business process workflow document to illustrate at what point in information operations liaison involvement becomes necessary. Some even suggested that the lack of clarity in their roles and responsibilities and possible duplication of IRM Operations activities might mean that the liaison function is redundant. The need for defined roles and responsibilities for the office was addressed within the Mission and Goals section of this report.

### *Performance Measures*

CLD has no performance metrics to monitor case loads or measure how well the liaisons do their work. This condition follows naturally from CLD's inability to clearly define roles and responsibilities. Another contributing factor is that much of the liaisons' work depends on the participation of other entities to produce a result. Many internal opinions expressed on the quality of their work are not based on quantifiable or objective measures but are formed intuitively. Liaisons generally rely on informal feedback from customers to evaluate their success. Customer surveys have been conducted in the past but were generally found to be unsuccessful. The main source of information for supervisors to evaluate individual liaison performance is the weekly activity report liaisons provide to branch chiefs, which is self-reported. The lack of consistent and objective performance measures means CLD has no reliable means of judging performance and evaluating whether it is achieving its mission and thus no objective means of assessing whether it is appropriately resourced.

**Recommendation 24:** The Office of eDiplomacy should develop performance measures for the Customer Liaison Division. (Action: eDiplomacy)

### *Standard Operating Procedures*

There are currently no standard operating procedures for CLD. One of the newest liaisons has volunteered to develop them as she gains more knowledge about the job. As it is, each liaison tends to define his or her own role and approach to the work. There is no check-in process or sponsor program for new employees, although the division has indicated that it is initiating such a program. There is ambiguity as to what level of involvement liaisons have with IRM's trouble ticket system—some use it quite heavily, others not at all. There is also no definition of what constitutes VIP service or how many VIPs bureaus can designate for such service. The division admits that this is a difficult problem that requires cooperation from the serviced bureaus. The lack of standard operating procedures compounds the issue of inadequate performance measurement that has been highlighted throughout this report.

**Recommendation 25:** The Office of eDiplomacy should create a handbook of standard operating procedures for the Customer Liaison Division that includes objectives, means, and measures for determining what scenarios require liaison officer involvement. The handbook should provide guidelines for liaison officer action, benchmarks for measuring officer success, and a basis for employee check-in processes for new liaison officers. (Action: eDiplomacy)

### *Outreach*

Outreach and associated activities necessary to increase exposure to and familiarity with CLD's domestic and regional branches is absent. CLD domestic and regional liaisons almost universally acknowledged that customers do not know who they are or what they do. OIG conducted a survey during the inspection and similarly found that most overseas posts do not know who their assigned liaison is. The Project Services Office also conducted a study and found a lack of familiarity with CLD services. Bureaus, on the other hand, do have more familiarity due to interaction with liaisons during IT Consolidation.

This lack of familiarity is due in part to the fact that new-hire information management specialists do not always attend the CLD briefings included on their consultation schedule. Also, CLD briefings at Foreign Service Institute occur too early in information management specialist training, which means much is typically forgotten by the time the officers begin their overseas tours. In its attempts to boost awareness of its domestic and regional branches, CLD has tried to engage in outreach by using cables and emails; however, these efforts have not been successful. CLD also recently held a town hall meeting that focused on customer service and are starting a program of “hot seating,” where domestic liaisons have office hours at their assigned bureau site.

However, the hot seating and town hall meeting do not address the root of the problem, which is lack of overseas awareness. As a result, potential customers are bypassing the liaisons and going directly to IRM service providers. This marginalizes or perhaps even calls into question the utility of CLD services.

**Recommendation 26:** The Office of eDiplomacy, in coordination with the Bureau of Information Resource Management, should define and codify the services of the Customer Liaison Division within the universal service-level agreement of the Bureau of Information Resource Management. (Action: eDiplomacy, in coordination with IRM)

**Recommendation 27:** The Office of eDiplomacy should develop and implement a plan of outreach activities to increase awareness of the services of the Customer Liaison Division among Department of State information management employees. (Action: eDiplomacy)

### *Training Plans*

There is no formal training plan for staff development in CLD. CLD personnel are encouraged to sign up for courses as they see fit, and training is seldom denied. However, the courses are not chosen according to a curriculum designed to meet either the goals and objectives of the office or the short- and long-term development needs of individual liaisons. Many of the liaisons come from operational backgrounds, where they were responsible for maintaining systems and fixing problems as they occurred. Assisting others in navigating a bureaucratic maze requires a rather different skill set. In fact, a report issued by IRM’s Project Services Office this year described the needed skills as “a set of account management skills, particularly soft skills that the typical CLD representative does not possess or has not received training on in order to fulfill new performance and customer service level demands.” The process of evaluating the existing skill sets within the office and developing a training continuum to meet the needs of the liaison function would also help to determine appropriate staffing levels and achieve a balance among Civil Service, Foreign Service, and other employee categories.

**Informal Recommendation 5:** The Office of eDiplomacy should develop a training plan that lays out a course of study to aid in the development of the skills required of a customer liaison.

### *Administrative Functions*

The Domestic branch has a management analyst and an intern who perform administrative functions for all IRM offices in State Annex-9, where eDiplomacy is also located. The arrangement was based on the plans of the former deputy CIO for Operations, but the role is

not well defined. The position is also not optimally placed in the Domestic, as there is insufficient access to information for procurement decisions. The position would be better suited reporting to an organizational level that has authority over all office residents in State Annex-9 or to the Bureau of Administration, which provides the remaining administrative functions to IRM.

**Recommendation 28:** The Office of eDiplomacy, in coordination with the Bureau of Administration's Executive Office, should relocate the administrative function that provides procurement support such that it reports to an organizational entity with oversight for all of the supported offices. (Action: eDiplomacy, in coordination with A/EX)

***Rover Coordinators***

Two when actually employed staff members of the Regional branch operate a rover program that provides temporary duty support to overseas posts. Although effectively run, the program is entirely distinct from the rest of CLD operations. Aside from their weekly reporting on activities, the two staff members have little interaction with the rest of CLD and do not base rover assignments on liaison interactions with posts. It is an autonomous operation and could just as readily fit into many other offices within IRM. Its placement is illustrative of the tendency to use eDiplomacy as a home for anomalous components of IRM.

## List of Recommendations

**Recommendation 1:** The Office of eDiplomacy, in coordination with the Office of the Chief Information Officer, should establish and mandate a mission statement for the office that outlines its core focus and mission for the Department of State. (Action: eDiplomacy, in coordination with CIO)

**Recommendation 2:** The Office of eDiplomacy, in coordination with the Office of the Chief Information Officer, should develop and disseminate goals and objectives for its office, divisions, and branches/teams to define their core functions and develop corresponding operational plans. (Action: eDiplomacy, in coordination with CIO)

**Recommendation 3:** The Office of eDiplomacy should develop a plan to reach out, in keeping with its own fundamental mission, to other Federal agencies and the private sector in pursuit of technologies and innovations that could significantly transform the Department of State's ability to exploit its existing information resources. (Action: eDiplomacy)

**Recommendation 4:** The Bureau of Information Resource Management should relocate the Customer Liaison Division so that it reports directly to the Business Management and Planning Directorate. (Action: IRM)

**Recommendation 5:** The Bureau of Information Resource Management should relocate the External Affairs branch from the Office of eDiplomacy to the Office of the Chief Information Officer. (Action: IRM)

**Recommendation 6:** The Office of eDiplomacy should conduct an analysis of its staffing levels to determine those sufficient for supporting core functions and sustainable projects. (Action: eDiplomacy)

**Recommendation 7:** The Office of eDiplomacy, in coordination with the Bureau of Administration's Executive Office, should designate one permanent individual to handle management and administrative functions for the office and rewrite that individual's position description to reflect those duties. (Action: eDiplomacy, in coordination with A/EX)

**Recommendation 8:** The Office of eDiplomacy, in coordination with the Bureau of Administration's Executive Office, should develop a thorough orientation program for new employees that covers office structure, operations, and projects and that integrates those employees into existing team structures. (Action: eDiplomacy, in coordination with A/EX)

**Recommendation 9:** The Office of eDiplomacy should develop a general outreach plan based on its overall goals, objectives, and services. This plan should include, at a minimum, marketing strategies that are tied to success indicators for each individual project and service. (Action: eDiplomacy)

**Recommendation 10:** The Office of eDiplomacy should obtain formal designation letters for their assigned information systems security officers. (Action: eDiplomacy)

**Recommendation 11:** The Office of eDiplomacy, in coordination with the Bureau of Administration's Executive Office, should establish controls over supply procurement and storage. (Action: eDiplomacy, in coordination with A/EX)

**Recommendation 12:** The Office of eDiplomacy, in coordination with the Bureau of Administration's Executive Office, should define and enforce a funding approval process to be used for all travel requests. (Action: eDiplomacy, in coordination with A/EX)

**Recommendation 13:** The Bureau of Information Resource Management should rewrite the public affairs officer's position description so that this officer reports directly to the chief information officer. (Action: IRM)

**Recommendation 14:** The Office of eDiplomacy, in coordination with the Bureau of Administration's Executive Office, should formalize the Diplomatic Innovation Division team structure to include clear supervisory lines. (Action: eDiplomacy, in coordination with A/EX)

**Recommendation 15:** The Office of eDiplomacy, in coordination with the Bureau of Administration's Executive Office, should develop position descriptions for team leaders to formalize management and oversight responsibilities and make position grades commensurate with their duties. (Action: eDiplomacy, in coordination with A/EX)

**Recommendation 16:** The Office of eDiplomacy should implement a scalable project management methodology that is consistent with Managing State Projects for all Diplomatic Innovation Division projects, paying specific attention to elements related to project initiation, prioritization, and operations phase ownership. (Action: eDiplomacy)

**Recommendation 17:** The Office of eDiplomacy should develop and implement a performance measurement plan for Diplomatic Innovation Division projects that clearly articulates project goals and objectives and identifies output and outcome measures for assessing and reporting project results. (Action: eDiplomacy)

**Recommendation 18:** The Office of eDiplomacy, in coordination with the Bureau of Information Resource Management, should eliminate the Collaboration Clearinghouse and replace it with appropriate business models and consulting services for the Department of State. (Action: eDiplomacy, in coordination with IRM)

**Recommendation 19:** The Bureau of Information Resource Management should develop and disseminate a clear purpose and objectives document for the Information Technology Innovation Fund that includes detailed milestones, performance measures, and approval criterion for project proposals. (Action: IRM)

**Recommendation 20:** The Office of eDiplomacy, in coordination with the Bureau of Information Resource Management, should consult with representatives of the SharePoint Working Group to clarify and establish a policy on the roles and responsibilities for handling SharePoint-related activities. (Action: eDiplomacy, in coordination with IRM)

**Recommendation 21:** The Office of eDiplomacy should remove the Virtual Presence Post from its listed programs and stop allocating resources to it. (Action: eDiplomacy)

**Recommendation 22:** The Office of eDiplomacy, in coordination with the Office of the Chief Information Officer, should determine which office should have ownership of the Virtual Student Foreign Service program. (Action: eDiplomacy, in coordination with CIO)

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## Informal Recommendations

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

***Informal Recommendation 1:*** The Office of eDiplomacy should counsel Diplomatic Innovation Division team leaders to provide continuous and consistent feedback to their employees on projects and initiatives.

***Informal Recommendation 2:*** The Office of eDiplomacy should identify and support travel opportunities for staff that maximize return on investment by combining conference attendance and presentations with outreach and evaluation activities at overseas posts.

***Informal Recommendation 3:*** The Office of eDiplomacy should provide Diplopedia users with a clear and easy-to-use mechanism for reporting out-of-date, inaccurate, or incomplete content.

***Informal Recommendation 4:*** The Office of eDiplomacy should designate a full-time or nearly full-time staff member to serve as the Diplopedia content manager/editor.

***Informal Recommendation 5:*** The Office of eDiplomacy should develop a training plan that lays out a course of study to aid in the development of the skills required of a customer liaison.

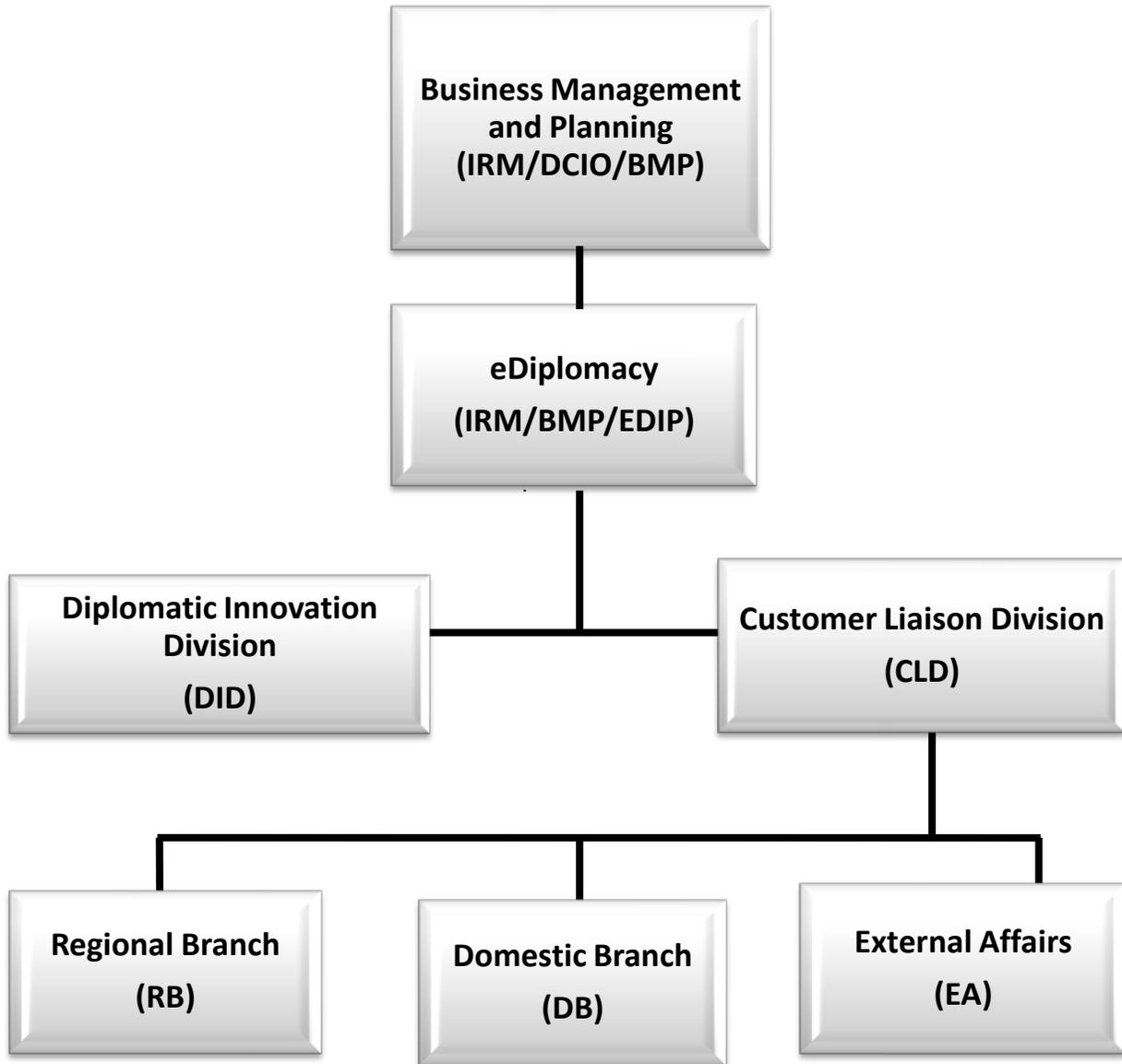
## Principal Officials

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Arrival Date</b>
Director	Richard Boly	01/09
Deputy Director	Scott Smith	08/10
Division Chiefs		
Diplomatic Innovation Division Chief	Scott Smith	08/10
Customer Liaison Division Chief	Diane Peterson	09/10

## Abbreviations

BMP	Bureau of Business Management and Planning
BSRP	Bureau Strategic and Resource Plan
CIO	Chief information officer
CLD	Customer Liaison Division
DID	Diplomatic Innovation Division
eDiplomacy	Office of eDiplomacy
EUR	Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs
FAH	<i>Foreign Affairs Handbook</i>
FAM	<i>Foreign Affairs Manual</i>
IRM	Bureau of Information Resource Management
ISSO	Information systems security officer
IT	Information technology
KL	Knowledge Leadership
P&O	Policy and Outreach
SPUG	SharePoint Users Group
SPWG	SharePoint Working Group
VPP	Virtual Presence Post

## Appendix: EDiplomacy Organizational Chart



~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

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

Contact the  
Office of Inspector General  
**HOTLINE**  
to report illegal or wasteful activities:

202-647-3320  
800-409-9926

[oi hotline@state.gov](mailto:oi hotline@state.gov)

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U.S. Department of State  
P.O. Box 9778  
Arlington, VA 22219

Cables to the Inspector General  
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