



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

Office of Inspections

**Inspection of
Embassy Helsinki, Finland**

Report Number ISP-I-11-67A, September 2011

Office of Inspector General

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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 (OIG) 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 Broadcasting Board of Governors, and Congress with systematic and independent evaluations of the operations of the Department and the Broadcasting Board of Governors. 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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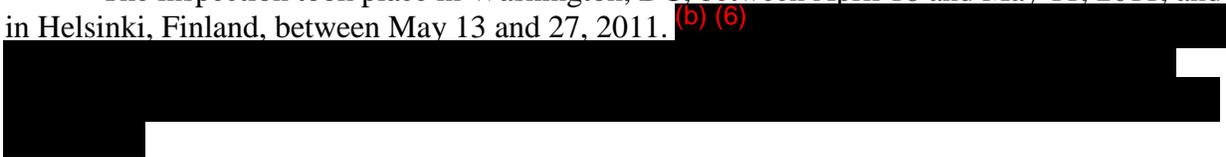
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Key Judgments

- An energetic, construction savvy, and persistent Ambassador has revived a stalled project to renovate the antiquated and unsafe chancery buildings; he is extremely involved in all details of the renovation and sees keeping the project on schedule as one of the greatest contributions he can make during his time in Finland.
- Sections of Embassy Helsinki, including security, management, consular, and public diplomacy, were moved from the existing chancery to temporary spaces with little planning or advance notice, beginning in September 2010. Eight months later, noisy and dirty construction in most of those spaces was only just nearing completion.
- In normal times, Embassy Helsinki's U.S. direct-hire and locally employed (LE) staff are rightsized. Ever since (and as a result of) the September 2010 move, frequent telephone and computer outages have lowered efficiency, while an active front office has continued to generate numerous tasks, which are usually urgent and unanticipated.
- (b) (5)
there is no LE staff association to give local staff a formal conduit for raising issues with embassy management.
- The Ambassador works closely with his public diplomacy staff to carry out an intense public speaking and travel program throughout Finland and has pushed them to expand the embassy's reach in social media. This visibility and his focus on energy efficiency have burnished America's positive public image and improved trade and investment prospects for U.S. energy related products.
- The management section has coped well during a trying time since the move and during several years of tight budget constraints. The deputy chief of mission (DCM) is leading an effort to regularize procedures and use recently increased and anticipated budget allocations wisely.
- Converting four of the six Finnish language designated positions to non-language designated positions could save \$500,000 per 3-year assignment cycle. In a society where English is a universal second language, Finnish language skills are largely unnecessary.
- The Ambassador chairs the League of Green Embassies, which now includes more than 70 U.S. missions. The league expects to receive \$500,000 from the regional bureau to fund energy efficiency improvements at other missions throughout the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs (EUR) region. To date, staffing and procedures have been informal and partially fall on already busy sections at Embassy Helsinki. It is time to clearly define this initiative and establish procedures for managing League of Green Embassies funds.

- The political/economic section has done well in understanding and reporting on new developments in Finnish politics, including the rise of the True Finn Party. Economic developments, of particular interest to U.S. Government consumers, need more attention from the combined section.

The inspection took place in Washington, DC, between April 18 and May 11, 2011, and in Helsinki, Finland, between May 13 and 27, 2011. (b) (6)



Context

Nestled in Europe's northeast corner, Finland is located between Sweden and Russia. Europe's eighth largest nation, Finland is also its most sparsely populated. The majority of its 5.4 million people reside in the more temperate southern region, which also serves as a gateway to Russia and the Baltic nations.

Mindful of past wars and the then-Soviet Union's looming presence, Finland maintained strict neutrality during the Cold War. Since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, however, Finland has moved toward integration into Western institutions. It became a member of the European Union in 1995 and the Euro Zone in 1999—the only Nordic country to do so. It joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) Partnership for Peace in 1994 and contributes to NATO operations in Kosovo and Afghanistan. At least some Finnish politicians favorably view eventual NATO membership.

Not all Finns have been happy with this rapid Western integration, however. The influence of the European Union in changing domestic Finnish regulations; the costs of financial bailouts for Greece, Ireland, and Portugal; and a growing immigrant population have caused unease and led to the success of the True Finns, a populist/nationalist party, in the April 2011 parliamentary election.

Finland's economy is based on services, manufacturing, and refining, with exports accounting for 37 percent of gross domestic product in 2009. In 2010, Finland ranked 7th in the World Economic Council's global competitiveness index. Known for its high tech companies, Finland has made universal broadband access a legal right. The per capita gross domestic product in 2009 was \$33,314. The country is still recovering from the international economic crisis; in 2010, gross domestic product growth was 3.1 percent.

U.S. relations with Finland are warm, bolstered by the March 2011 visit of Vice President Biden, the first high level U.S. visitor since President Clinton in 1997. American firms are interested in Finland, both as a market for trade and investment and as a gateway to Russia and the Baltic region. U.S. policy is focused largely on encouraging Finland's constructive engagement in regional and global challenges, particularly through NATO, and on supporting expanded American trade and investment.

Embassy Helsinki hosts the Department and three other agencies. Its total staffing of 126 includes 45 direct-hire Americans, 76 LE staff members, and 5 eligible family members. At the time of the inspection, the embassy was undergoing a long overdue renovation. The Ambassador is using the building renovation to highlight U.S. green technology. The renovated annex will be the first embassy to achieve Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design platinum status.

Executive Direction

Together, an energetic Ambassador and a competent DCM provide effective leadership at Embassy Helsinki. Most agency heads and section chiefs work well with both and perceive no differences between them on major issues. The two hold a weekly country team meeting to bring all elements of Embassy Helsinki together and to exchange information and views on cross-cutting issues. The meeting is open to LE staff, but few of them participate now that most have been relocated to temporary spaces at a distance from the chancery. The tone of these meetings is relaxed and collegial; participants appear comfortable in expressing their opinions and raising new issues.

To bring the Ambassador and DCM in more frequent contact with more of the staff and to counter perceptions that the Ambassador does not care about the morale of his employees, the OIG team suggested that the venue for country team meetings be rotated among the five currently occupied sites, so that every other session takes place in one of the temporary spaces. One such meeting took place in the security swing space near the end of the OIG team's visit to Helsinki.

Informal Recommendation 1: Embassy Helsinki should hold a country team meeting every other week at one of the temporary office spaces.

The Ambassador and DCM also hold more restricted weekly meetings with key American staff. Each also meets, generally weekly, with various sections or section chiefs. The meeting structure appears appropriate to the relatively small size of Embassy Helsinki.

Mission Strategic and Resource Plan

Embassy Helsinki completed and submitted its FY 2013 Mission Strategic and Resource Plan (MSRP) to the Department during the course of the inspection. The new plan retains the five goals of the previous MSRP, updates performance indicators, and opens with a well reasoned and thorough chief of mission statement. The Ambassador is deeply and personally engaged in three of the five goals: the embassy renovation, promoting environmental and energy innovation, and increasing U.S. trade and investment. The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO) acknowledges that the embassy renovation project would not have been funded or advanced at an accelerated pace without the constant pressure of the Ambassador, both from Helsinki and during frequent trips to Washington. In more than two dozen trips within Finland, he has used speeches, press interviews, and meetings with local officials to display U.S. green energy developments and allay Finnish suspicions that the U.S. Government is not interested in energy conservation. He also supports American firms, particularly in the energy and high-tech fields, that are interested in increasing their presence in Finland and using it as a base for expansion in the Baltic nations and Russia. With regard to other MSRP goals, the Ambassador and DCM lead a successful country team effort to analyze and report on Finland's rapidly evolving domestic political scene and the potential effects on its role in the European Union and as a NATO partner.

Morale and Locally Employed Staff Issues

The inspection occurred during a time of considerable upheaval in Embassy Helsinki. Once funding for the embassy renovation was assured, and because of a variety of safety and other concerns, the embassy annex was closed. In September 2010, and with little advance notice or planning, the security, management, public diplomacy, and consular sections moved to temporary off-site locations. Other elements of the mission moved into cramped quarters in the original chancery. (To allow for access to the public, half of the consular section remained in the annex until January 2011.) From September 2010 until May 2011, employees' work performance has been hampered by required security upgrades and other projects in their work spaces. Telephones and computers have not functioned for long periods of time, and employees have had little information about when their work environment would become stable.

(b) (5)

It is clear that employees do not question the need to renovate the dilapidated and unsafe facilities at Embassy Helsinki. Many also understand that without the Ambassador's persistence, the project would not be underway (a judgment shared by OBO). Concerns focus on the poorly planned move, the ensuing 9 months of noisy and dirty construction, and the lack of information about what comes next. (b) (5)

(b) (5)

After being counseled by the inspectors, the Ambassador took some immediate steps to increase communication, such as holding a town hall meeting and changing the venue for the country team meeting. The absence of a fully constituted and functioning LE staff committee has exacerbated the communication problem. A previous committee ceased to function at least 5 years ago. At the time of the inspection, a group of six self-appointed LE staff members were developing a constitutional framework and thinking of moving toward a formal election by year's end. It would be beneficial for embassy management to work with these and other local employees to form a committee, make sure it represents the various components of the LE staff, and meet with this committee regularly to develop and pursue a relevant agenda. The management officer should meet with this committee regularly, perhaps as often as once a month, and the DCM should meet with the committee quarterly.

Recommendation 1: Embassy Helsinki should work with its locally employed staff to establish a representative, elected, locally employed staff committee, and should meet with this committee on a regular basis to recognize and resolve issues of interest to locally employed staff. (Action: Embassy Helsinki)

Entry-Level Officers

Embassy Helsinki has a small complement of nontenured, first- and second-tour officers and specialists. One praised the DCM for his approachability and informality, and for the good advice he had given him during their association. The DCM had not included specialists in his mentoring program but was open to the suggestion that he do so. One untenured information management (IM) specialist is currently at the mission.

Policy and Program Implementation

Embassy Helsinki hosts BBG, the Department of Defense, and the U.S. Foreign Commercial Service. Department section heads coordinate and have close collegial relationships with the other agency representatives.

The Political/Economic Section

Embassy Helsinki has a four-officer political/economic section, headed by an experienced FS-02 political officer. There are three other positions: an FS-02 political/military officer; an FS-03 environment, science, technology, and health (ESTH) officer; and an entry-level officer. An LE U.S. citizen office manager, an LE political assistant, and an LE economic specialist assist the section's officers. The section is adequately staffed, although all four of the section's officers were scheduled to leave during the summer, an unfortunate result of the three officers routinely rotating and one officer leaving the embassy early.

The section's agenda is driven by U.S. efforts to influence Finland's voice in the European Union, strengthen its role in international crisis management (including in Afghanistan), and build a strong partnership in a range of global issues, including the environment. The section's advocacy and reporting support MSRP goals. The Ambassador generally delegates responsibility for advocating U.S. political and economic foreign policy objectives to the DCM and the political/economic section chief, as he pursues other priorities involving green initiatives and commercial advocacy. The section maintains productive relations with a variety of Finnish official, civil society, commercial, and academic contacts. Well organized weekly staff meetings help ensure good communication within the section, which recently was moved to cramped office space within the chancery for the duration of the above mentioned, multiyear renovation project.

Until the summer of 2009, Embassy Helsinki had separate political and economic sections. According to U.S. Government end users, merging the sections coincided with a fall-off in economic reporting. The OIG team confirmed a higher proportion of political reports in the past year, which is only partially attributable to increased demands on the section's economic staff to support front office requests.

Informal Recommendation 2: Embassy Helsinki should coordinate with the Office of Nordic and Baltic Affairs, to develop and implement a revised reporting plan that reflects U.S. Government consumers' interest in more frequent reporting, including more economic reporting.

U.S. Government consumers found, and the section itself agreed, the frequency of past reporting was not what it should have been. This situation improved, at least on the political side, during the months leading up to and after the pivotal April 2011 parliamentary election. Washington consumers praised the quality of this pre-election reporting—in particular, the section's analysis of the growing strength of the populist True Finn Party. Reportable material that does not rise to the level of a stand-alone cable is reported in a compilation, entitled the *Helsinki Pol/Econ Weekly*. The OIG team suggested that the section distribute this product more broadly by posting it on the U.S. Government's intranet.

The ESTH officer's portfolio meshes closely with the Ambassador's focus on green technology. Consequently, the section spends much time and energy working with the front office, the public affairs section (PAS), and the Foreign Commercial Service to support events for the Ambassador, who is in demand as a speaker and who initiates many green technology related visits to Finland from the United States. At the Ambassador's request, the ESTH officer began producing a weekly ESTH report to update him on relevant developments. The section subsequently broadened the weekly report's distribution via cable. The OIG team suggested that this product, too, be disseminated on the U.S. Government's intranet, and that the section provide U.S. Government consumers with spot reports and analyses of ESTH issues beyond the weekly newsletter.

The section has reduced its paper files and depends increasingly on electronic filing. However, the electronic filing system is not properly organized. The paper files, while reduced in volume, have not been retired, in accordance with regulations (5 FAM 433; 5 FAH-4 H-300). As a result of the poorly organized files, information is difficult to retrieve.

Recommendation 2: Embassy Helsinki should bring its political/economic section's files into compliance with Department of State regulations on records management. (Action: Embassy Helsinki)

Trade Promotion

The political/economic section ably assists the U.S. Foreign Commercial Service in support of the Ambassador's energetic trade promotion initiatives. In FY 2010, Helsinki's U.S. Foreign Commercial Service office was responsible for \$112 million in U.S. export promotion, making it the strongest performing office in Europe, when comparing the dollar value of exports against the gross domestic product of the target market. The political/economic section supports these efforts, mostly by helping arrange green technology visits and providing briefings for U.S. business people.

Law Enforcement Coordination

The regional security officer is the only law enforcement officer at Embassy Helsinki. Regional representatives from the Department of Homeland Security, Federal Bureau of Investigation, and Drug Enforcement Administration visit quarterly. Other U.S. Government law enforcement representatives come to the embassy as needed. The regional security officer maintains collegial relations with the other agencies, which advise him on matters affecting Finland. A political/economic section officer also engages Finnish law enforcement officials on policy related issues. This officer and the regional security officer enjoy a good working relationship. The regional security officer's relations with Finnish law enforcement authorities also are very good.

Public Affairs Section

In the past year, PAS has overcome a legacy of estrangement from the rest of the embassy that had marginalized the section, cost it effective control over its own budget, (b) (5) The change began with the arrival of a

new PAS leadership team, including a management-coned public affairs officer (PAO) of Finnish extraction with the administrative skills (b) (5) [REDACTED] the cultural sensitivity to reverse poor morale among the section's eight LE staff members. Since then, PAS has largely regained the Ambassador's trust as well as control of its own budget, and it has repaired relationships with other embassy sections.

The PAO and her public diplomacy experienced assistant PAO also have improved (b) (5) [REDACTED] the section, a signal achievement in view of the troubling disruptions caused by the section having to move out of its offices in a chancery annex to swing space which, months later, is still under construction. PAS moved into its new offices in late September 2010, but the embassy did not connect the section to the Department's Sensitive But Unclassified intranet until over a month later, and staff did not have working phones for almost 2 months. On the other hand, the PAO's relative inexperience in public diplomacy and her desire to reverse the section's difficult relations with the front office created other issues. She and her able assistant PAO are addressing those issues successfully. The Ambassador, embassy section heads, and local staff—both in PAS and in other parts of the embassy—speak highly of the deputy, particularly his ability to get to the heart of an issue quickly and come up with a practical solution. The PAO has taken advantage of the assistant PAO's skills and experience.

Use of Social Media

In response to the Ambassador's strong personal interest in social media and the technological sophistication of the host country, PAS Helsinki significantly expanded its social media toolkit, hiring a consultant to guide initial efforts. It also is providing comprehensive training in video production to make the visual content of its social media sites more compelling.

The embassy's Web site features a blog entitled, *Ambassador's Journal*, with links to his official Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and Flickr accounts. The Ambassador provides content for the sites, with PAS's American Resource Center overseeing technical management. Unfortunately, content is not updated often. As of May 2011, the last blog posted in the *Ambassador's Journal* was in mid-January, and the last posting to his Facebook page was at the end of March. The social media sites managed by PAS were more current, with daily inputs.

Keeping the mission's multiple social media sites current is likely to become more difficult. The American Resource Center is taking on management (supposedly temporary) of the Web site of the League of Green Embassies; the Ambassador has recently assumed leadership of the league and is exceptionally interested in its issues. This new responsibility will increase the Center's workload and further strain PAS's efforts to keep social media sites updated. The section needs to work with the Ambassador and mission elements to prevent the embassy from overreaching in its social media efforts. By not updating sites frequently enough, the PAS might discourage the very audiences it wants to attract.

Informal Recommendation 3: Embassy Helsinki should examine its multiple social media sites and determine how many of them it can adequately maintain, developing those with largest audience share and eliminating others.

The American Resource Center

In addition to its Web site activities and more traditional role of providing reference and research material on U.S. history, culture, and politics, the American Resource Center (called the Information Resource Center at other posts) provides graphic design services for mission programs and sponsors a popular America@Your Library program. Through this program, the embassy donates books on American themes to school and community libraries, to maintain a continuing U.S. presence throughout Finland. According to the Washington-based information resource officer, the Helsinki center is the strongest unit in her European region. She is helping to update its collection, in anticipation of the center's move in 2012 to the University of Helsinki's ultramodern library, a short distance away from its current home at Finland's National Library in downtown Helsinki. PAS believes this new location will increase foot traffic by students, a much sought after demographic. Moreover, the space is being provided at no cost to the U.S. Government, in return for integrating the center's book collection into the university's library holdings.

Exchange Programs

PAS has an active and well run exchange program. The Finland–U.S. Educational Exchange Commission oversees the Fulbright scholarship program. Officials responsible for European Fulbright programs in the Department call Finland's Fulbright commission a "model program." They also say its executive director is one of the best in the Fulbright network, citing her work persuading Finnish academic and philanthropic communities to invest in Fulbright exchanges. For example, out of the program's FY 2010 budget of over \$2.1 million, just under \$700,000 (or about a third) came from the U.S. and Finnish Governments. Almost \$425,000 came from interest and investment income from the Finland–America Educational Trust Fund (an endowment derived from the repayment of a 1919 Finnish debt to the United States), and almost \$1 million dollars came from a variety of purely Finnish sources. The director also positioned the commission to be a part of one of Finland's most ambitious higher education projects—the creation of Aalto University from the merger of three highly regarded Finnish universities—by sponsoring a distinguished chair for an American scholar. The Finnish Government intends for Aalto to be one of the leading teaching and research institutions in the world, and Fulbright will have a presence there from the start.

Thanks to a push from the Ambassador and unexpected funding at the end of FY 2010, PAS Helsinki invested \$60,000 in a summer exchange program to send 15 Finnish high school students on a short trip to the United States. The trip will showcase U.S. energy innovation, and it mirrors a Finnish program that brings 14 American students to Finland each summer. Should the new, embassy-sponsored program be as successful as envisioned, and should the budget continue to tighten, it will be necessary to find supplementary funding sources for future youth exchanges.

Informal Recommendation 4: Embassy Helsinki should develop a plan to tap private sector sources to continue or expand its new youth exchange program.

Public Affairs Section Grants

The section has used public diplomacy grants to further multiple section and mission goals. As described above, grants have funded the youth exchange program, as well as cultural

and library programs; short visits to NATO by journalists and Finnish parliamentarians; workshops to engage minority immigrant populations; and an alumni coordinator position at the Fulbright Commission. The grants files are in excellent order, with all required documentation provided. The current PAO has a grants warrant; the assistant PAO does not. It is imperative that the assistant PAO obtain one as soon as possible, as he will become the PAO this summer. Since PAS Helsinki has an active grants program, the new assistant PAO also should obtain a grants warrant before arriving.

Informal Recommendation 5: Embassy Helsinki should require the public affairs officer-designate and the new assistant public affairs officer to take grants management training and obtain grants warrants prior to assuming their new positions.

The PAO and assistant PAO intend to develop a strategic focus for PAS programs and resources. The OIG team concurs that developing such a strategy is necessary. Money will be tighter, but demands on the section will continue to grow, especially in view of the Ambassador's chairmanship of the League of Green Embassies. It will be important for PAS officers and staff to work closely, to prioritize the multiple demands on their time and resources by the front office and other embassy sections. PAS leadership will need to keep the section focused on not only the immediate mission objectives but also the cultural and other programs that serve the long-term goals of mutual understanding.

Consular Affairs

General Management/Workspace

Notwithstanding that they have been working in extraordinary circumstances from September 2010 to May 2011, the consular section in Helsinki is running smoothly and has very good morale, a result of excellent leadership. It is appropriately staffed.

At the end of September 2010, citing fire and safety risks, the embassy closed the annex and precipitously moved out the employees. Because it needed hardline interview windows, however, half the consular section was allowed to remain in the unsafe annex—while it was being gutted—to attend to the public. The other half of the eight-person section moved to the swing space across town, which also was under construction. In February 2011, the embassy moved the interview windows to the swing space and opened the new consular section to the public.

The consular section now is located on the 5th floor of a commercial office building in the center of town. It is near a Helsinki Metro stop and the main railroad station, and around the corner from the embassy's temporary management office. According to current plans, the consular section would be the last to return to the chancery following the renovation, currently scheduled to take place in 2014.

The current space, which is still under construction (the hardline doors may not be completely installed until the end of July 2011), has many shortcomings. Nonabsorbing materials on the floor, ceiling, and walls create a discernable echo in the interview booths. As a result, consular employees have difficulty hearing clients.

Recommendation 3: Embassy Helsinki, in coordination with the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, should install sound absorbing materials on both sides of the consular interview windows, including the floor, ceiling, and walls. (Action: Embassy Helsinki, in coordination with OBO)

(b) (5)

Recommendation 4: (b) (5)

Consular staff serves the public through three interview windows, one of which has been partitioned off as a cashier booth. The cashier shares one of the three interview windows

(b) (5)

Recommendation 5: (b) (5)

Long-Term Use of Swing Space

The embassy and the Bureau of Consular Affairs have been considering leaving the consular section in the swing space permanently, rather than moving it back to the chancery at the end of the renovation. However, the savings that could be achieved by keeping the consular section in the swing space need to be balanced with the costs.

Factors in favor of remaining in the swing space include:

- Longer use of the investment made to upgrade the temporary work area.
- Convenience to consular employees. The space is located next to a metro stop, which reduces average commutes by about 20 minutes each way.
- Convenience to the public. The space is located downtown, (although the embassy was only a 5-minute walk from a tram stop).

Factors in favor of returning the consular section to the embassy:

- Mission Cohesion: The consular section would not be isolated from the embassy.
- Security: The embassy would not need to obtain a new colocation waiver. Also, consular officers would have easier access to classified information.

- Accountability: If the Class B cashier moved back to the chancery and the consular section remained downtown, the distance between the offices would complicate end-of-day cash deposits.
- Interview Windows: The section needs five interview windows, including a cashier window. The swing space has only three.
- Privacy: There are no private interview booths in the swing space.
- Security Screening: The small screening area for consular clients limits appointments to three people at a time. The rest must wait in the stairwell or downstairs.
- Space: Remaining in the swing space would necessitate incorporating additional space along another arm of the L-shaped office, (b) (5)

The hastily executed swing space could be used in the long term only with a significant investment to bring it up to standards. The Department can decide which option is best only after OBO determines the detailed plans and projected costs of both options. Since the projected move will not occur for years, an immediate decision is not required. Because a move back to the chancery would cause significant inconvenience to the consular staff, however, planning for the process should be transparent and inclusive.

Visas

Embassy Helsinki has a full-service visa operation. A nonimmigrant visa waiver country, Finland still generates several thousand non-tourist/business visa applications a year. In addition, a diverse third-country national clientele adds variety to the workload. The immigrant workload is small. The Department is evaluating the consolidation of immigrant visa processing in the region, a worthy goal. The OIG team found that visa processing in Helsinki generally complied with Department guidance, with the consul appropriately asking the Department for advice in unusual cases.

The embassy had not processed any visa referrals in the 12 months from May 2010 to May 2011. Section chiefs reported that the Finns do not ask for visa favors. At the time of the inspection, the embassy's visa referral policy was not fully consistent with 9 FAM, Appendix K, Exhibit I, and the management counselor, rather than the front office, had distributed the policy. During the inspection, the Ambassador reissued the policy, which now conforms to regulations. In addition, the consular chief had not briefed most of the section chiefs on visa referral procedures. Properly training the embassy staff will equip them to appropriately handle all inquiries about visas.

Informal Recommendation 6: Embassy Helsinki should provide a visa referral class for all section chiefs, agency heads, and their office management specialists.

Visas Viper

The DCM holds Visas Viper meetings monthly; the results of the meetings have been transmitted to the Department on time in 9 of the 12 months from May 2010 to May 2011. Three reports were late. There were no submissions during the period examined.

American Citizens Services

Embassy Helsinki's consular section provides good American citizens services. An increase in tourism, especially from large cruise ships, has increased workload, but not to the extent that it strains resources. The consular section occasionally assists medical evacuations from states of the former Soviet Union. Reflecting the high penetration by cellular phones and the Internet in Finland, the section relies on direct communication to notify U.S. citizens of emergencies.

Fraud

The embassy's third-country visa applicants occasionally attempt to commit consular fraud. A seasoned consular Foreign Service national manages the section's antifraud efforts appropriately. During the OIG team's visit, a Finnish airport immigration official detained a possible imposter from West Africa using a U.S. passport. The consular section promptly and efficiently coordinated with the host government law enforcement to confirm the fraud. The Finnish Government deported the perpetrator back to Africa.

International Broadcasting Bureau

The International Broadcasting Bureau maintains a regional technical monitoring office in Vantaa, a suburb of Helsinki. The OIG team visited the Vantaa office and found no problems with its operations.

Two Finnish employees manage the facility, which monitors the technical quality and signal strength of International Broadcasting Bureau sponsored broadcasts, including Radio Free Europe, via a network of 20 live (human) monitors and 10 remote (computerized) monitors. The monitors are located largely in the former Soviet Union and its periphery. International Broadcasting Bureau Vantaa personnel receive and analyze data from the monitors and attempt to find solutions for problems causing poor transmission quality. Although some of the office's work might be done in Washington, the International Broadcasting Bureau official responsible for overseeing the office's operations believes the work could not be done as well in the United States, citing the Vantaa staff's ability to distinguish between the multiplicity of languages monitored, identify the sources of interference, and take quick corrective action.

The Vantaa station works closely and well with the embassy's security and management offices. The station's security posture meets or exceeds requirements. The monitoring station uses International Cooperative Administrative Support Services (ICASS) to handle time and attendance, travel, and vouchers for its own personnel and to pay the hourly salaries of its International Broadcasting Bureau funded live monitors. The monitoring station has an independent computer system that is connected to International Broadcasting Bureau Washington; staff uses a remote access device to connect to the Department's OpenNet computer system.

Resource Management

Agency	U.S. Direct-Hire Staff (Authorized)	U.S. Local Hire Staff	Locally Employed Staff (Authorized)	Total Staff	Total Funding FY 2010
Department – Diplomatic & Consular Programs	22	1	11	34	\$3,317,478
Department – ICASS	2	4	38	44	\$5,844,300
Department – Public Diplomacy	2		8	10	\$1,041,300
Department – Diplomatic Security	3		1	4	\$1,418,719
Department – Marine Security	6		8	14	\$ 309,927
Department – Representation					\$ 35,700
Department – Public Diplomacy Representation					\$ 9,200
Department – OBO	1		1	2	\$3,391,940
Defense Attaché Office	7		2	9	\$ 515,870
Office of Defense Cooperation	1		1	2	\$ 217,923
Foreign Commercial Service	1		4	5	\$ 536,533
Broadcasting Board of Governors			2	2	\$ 386,000
Totals	45	5	76	126	\$17,024,890

Management Overview

In general, Embassy Helsinki is well funded and appropriately staffed. The OBO funding for routine maintenance and repair, however, is not sufficient and staffing of management offices is lean. Embassy Helsinki received a FY 2010 end-of-year infusion of diplomatic and consular program funding of \$1.3 million. The just received FY 2011 budget appears to be in line with mission requirements. EUR has promised \$500,000 for a League of Green Embassies initiative to place U.S. energy-efficient manufactured products in other U.S. embassies in the league.

The mission's overriding management priority has been preparing for, accomplishing, and now adjusting to the move to three swing space locations and preparing for a major chancery rehabilitation project. The dislocation of offices and the lack of reliable telephone and computer capability during this period understandably contributed to a degradation of management services. Once the swing space modifications are completed, management operations should be better positioned to deliver reliable services.

Management Office

The management counselor, a strong and experienced leader, also performs the human resources and financial management duties. A first-time general services officer (GSO) and a first-tour facility manager assist him. Three IM officers and three eligible family members complete this section. The LE staff is, for the most part, well trained, competent, and service oriented.

The urgent and unplanned relocation of staff from the embassy annex, due to fire and safety concerns, placed a heavy burden on management. Locating and leasing three office locations; moving staff, furniture, and equipment; setting up phone and network connections; and renovating spaces to meet the Bureau of Diplomatic Security and consular requirements all challenged the management team. Difficulties and failures, most notably those related to phone and computers, prompted understandable outcries. The overall 2011 ICASS score was slightly below both the EUR 2011 and Helsinki's 2010 scores. Scores of the OIG workplace and quality of life questionnaire also confirm a general dissatisfaction with aspects of management services, facilities, housing, internal telephone, medical unit, and the community liaison office (CLO). The OIG team's work in Helsinki confirmed these views.

Two MSRP goals guide the management office: protecting the environment and promoting energy innovation; and renovating, rightsizing, and securing the chancery, annex building, and chief of mission residence.

These two goals intersect in the Ambassador's advocacy of green technology as a keystone of the chancery renovation. Broadening his impact, the Ambassador is the chairman of the League of Green Embassies. The League of Green Embassies staffing in Helsinki will increase when EUR transfers an eligible family member position currently at Embassy Kyiv to Helsinki. The League of Green Embassies agenda will expand with the above mentioned \$500,000 in funding from EUR. These funds are to be used by the ambassadors of other EUR missions in the U.S. League of Green Embassies to purchase green products for their missions.

Embassy Helsinki will provide oversight for the initiative, but it has not fully considered the impact of this new role on its operations. Moreover, EUR has not provided formal guidance and procedures for how the League of Green Embassies funds should be used. Without clear guidelines and procedures, participating embassies might not make optimal use of the League of Green Embassies funds, and it may be difficult to maintain a careful accounting.

Recommendation 6: The Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs should provide Embassy Helsinki with guidelines and procedures for allocating and controlling the League of Green Embassies Funds. (Action: EUR, in coordination with Embassy Helsinki)

As noted elsewhere, Embassy Helsinki is in the first stages of an \$82 million rehabilitation project. The Office of Acquisition Management has not yet awarded this contract, but demolition of the interior of the annex building has begun as part of a sewer project in the annex and chancery buildings. In addition to renovating the annex building and chief of mission residence, a controlled access area will be constructed. Completion dates for each building varies; the annex is slated to be finished first, in January 2013.

General Services

The GSO is supported by an American citizen LE general services assistant. The GSO has overall responsibility for the entire operation and directly manages housing, motor pool, mail operations, procurement, and travel. The general services assistant oversees property management and warehousing, customs and shipping, and the material movement operation. Twenty other LE staff members work in general services.

Housing

The housing section is a one-person operation that works well with the interagency housing board. Survey respondents flagged the quality of housing as a community concern. In addition to the government-owned chief of mission residence and DCM's residence, there are 10 other government-owned residences, as well as 32 short-term leased residences. The chief issue affecting housing is the move to sell six poorly maintained properties at a time when the mission finds it difficult to obtain suitable leased housing for 10 incoming families. Also, the mission is looking for a new Marine security guard quarters for its downsized Marine security guard detachment.

While it might be in Embassy Helsinki's best interests to keep several of the properties that are designated to be sold, the long-term lack of adequate maintenance funding argues against keeping them, and OBO has granted permission to sell the properties. The properties will be appraised soon. One strategy is to sell the four Kavallintie properties to an investor, then lease them back once needed repairs and maintenance are done.

The OIG team believes that a business case also could be made for selling one of the Kavallintie properties and allowing the embassy to keep the proceeds of the sale to rehabilitate the other three. The projected savings of some \$190,000 a year should, over time, exceed the costs to rehabilitate the three properties—and the U.S. Government would retain valuable assets. The four Kavallintie properties are either three- or four-bedroom, duplex homes in a shared development/association that includes two non-government-owned properties. Assignments to these properties are complicated by outstanding health concerns related to mold and moisture problems.

The OIG team supports the embassy's efforts to request additional funds from OBO for preventive maintenance and repair of its government-owned housing. Doing so would alleviate the need to sell the remaining, deteriorating properties and replace them with leases, which would cost much more over time than maintaining the government-owned residences.

Recommendation 7: Embassy Helsinki should develop and submit to the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations a business case for selling one of the four Kavallintie properties and retaining the proceeds of the sale to rehabilitate the remaining three properties. (Action: Embassy Helsinki, in coordination with OBO)

Embassy Helsinki is considering rescinding its request to sell the Kulosaarentie residence, as it is being considered for the site of a Marine security guard quarters. If the property is to be used for this purpose, the embassy will need to obtain a Bureau of Diplomatic Security setback waiver. The Ambassador would like to demolish and replace it with a prototype, energy-efficient residence. A second option calls for solving the property's longstanding moisture and drainage problems, renovating it, and adding additional space.

Motor Pool

The motor pool consists of a dispatcher, two full-time drivers, and one half-time driver. Start times are only slightly staggered. Motor pool drivers back up the Marine security guard's drivers. Because of overtime costs and the Department's 10-hour driving shift limit, Embassy Helsinki wants to convert the half-time driver to full-time. The OIG team supports this change. Embassy Helsinki employees either drive motor pool vehicles themselves or use mission-provided taxi cards for official travel. Transportation on public transportation is also common. One of the motor pool's concerns is the short lead time provided for weekend travel needs. Assigning drivers for weekend duty is difficult when the request arrives on a Friday afternoon. The Ambassador's office manager is best positioned to inform the motor pool of upcoming trips, as she handles the Ambassador's schedule.

Informal Recommendation 7: Embassy Helsinki should require the Ambassador's office manager to provide the motor pool dispatcher with the Ambassador's weekend driver requirements by noon Friday, whenever possible.

Drivers have not had their required medical or vision examinations. Doing so should become a regular requirement of employment.

Informal Recommendation 8: Embassy Helsinki should arrange for the drivers to take their required vision and physical examinations.

The motor pool has 20 vehicles, including one each for the Ambassador, DCM, and engineering security officer. There are two Marine security guard vehicles, five Malmi warehouse vehicles, and three facilities maintenance/gardening vehicles. The remaining motor pool vehicles are general purpose. In the coming months, the unit will dispose of an old ICASS vehicle and acquire three diplomatic and consular program vehicles, two of which are hybrids and the other a minivan. The use of swing spaces downtown and at Malmi during the renovation places a heavier burden on motor pool resources, so the vehicle fleet will be larger than normal in the short run. Over time, the embassy will continue to rationalize the motor pool fleet to reflect mission needs.

Diplomatic Pouch Mail

The diplomatic pouch mail operation, which resides in a temporary structure, typically is part of the IM office. The two-person operation moved to the general services office several

years ago. The supervisor maintains a close working relationship with the material movement section in Malmi.

The mailroom clerk, an ICASS employee, is an eligible family member who has been detailed to the League of Green Embassies for 20 hours a week. His position description does not reflect the change in duties. Plans call for EUR to move a League of Green Embassies position from Embassy Kyiv to Embassy Helsinki. As a result, the mailroom staffing has been reduced 25 percent, which has strained its operations. In addition, the employee is on the ICASS payroll, but is not doing ICASS related work.

Informal Recommendation 9: Embassy Helsinki should return the mailroom clerk to his assigned position.

(b) (5)

Informal Recommendation 10: (b) (5)

Procurement

The one-person procurement section performs simplified acquisition tasks adequately, but lacks a strong grasp of contracting. There are three purchase card holders, which appears to be appropriate. One card holder uses the card only for secure purchases, which are appropriately done in person. There are five blanket purchase agreements for taxi services and vehicle maintenance, and two indefinite delivery/indefinite quantity contracts for vehicle rental and hotel rooms. The local guard contract expires in 2013; the Office of Acquisition Management will handle the follow-on contract.

There have been a number of unauthorized commitments, which the office has addressed locally or referred to the Office of the Procurement Executive for ratification. Ariba, the Department's Integrated Logistics Management System's procurement function, has been cited as a cause for some of these unauthorized commitments, as obligations take days to appear in the system. Other procurements have occurred outside of normal procurement channels, necessitating a follow-on procurement action. The management officer said that the embassy will reissue its management notice on how to avoid making unauthorized commitments.

Informal Recommendation 11: Embassy Helsinki should meet with all individuals who participate in procurement and educate them about proper procurement procedures and how to avoid unauthorized commitments.

At the close of FY 2010, the embassy received approximately \$1.3 million in diplomatic and consular program funds, which it managed to obligate, even though it lacked an acquisition plan. (For FY 2011, the embassy will create an acquisition plan to address possible year-end funding.) In addition to other projects, year-end funding was spent for landscaping and driveway paving at the chief of mission and DCM's residences, as well as for light emitting diode lights. A

purchase order for lighting at the DCM's residence has not yet been processed, because specific requirements have not been determined.

Informal Recommendation 12: Embassy Helsinki should determine the specific lighting requirements at the deputy chief of mission's residence and process this procurement.

The procurement section has not prepared a contract for Finnish workers' compensation, group life insurance, and unemployment insurance, even though the Office of Overseas Employment authorized it in August 2009 and EUR has funded it. As this LE staff benefit has been denied for a long period, contract completion should be a high priority for the procurement office. If the office is unable to complete the contract, it should request that the Frankfurt Regional Procurement Support Office do so.

Recommendation 8: Embassy Helsinki should either prepare the contract for Finnish workers' compensation, group life insurance, and unemployment insurance, or request that the Frankfurt Regional Procurement Support Office handle the contracting action. (Action: Embassy Helsinki)

Travel

The one-person travel section does not have a contract with a travel management center. It works through a Finnish travel agency via a memorandum of understanding. The travel agency gives the travel office access to its online booking software. There is a 10 euro fee per booked ticket for travel within Europe. For travel outside Europe, the agency makes the booking for a fee, based on the destination. The embassy plans to contract for its travel services.

Travelers do not prepare their own travel authorizations; the travel assistant does so. Embassy Helsinki plans to ask office managers to assume more travel duties, to include preparing travel authorizations through E2 Solutions. To assure success, the embassy will arrange E2 Solutions training for all responsible employees.

Family travel for representational purposes is a concern in Helsinki. In addressing this issue, regulations (14 FAM 532.1) are clear: "...The authorizing officer is expected to make sparing and judicious use of this authorization. In all cases, the justification must demonstrate a clear advantage to the United States." Further provisions address travel within the country of assignment, as well as documentation:

As a general guideline, local travel of a family member should be authorized when:

- (1) Representation by the officer alone could not be accomplished effectively; or (2) Protocol or local customs would be served; or (3) The travel is necessary in connection with VIP visits or important meetings at which spouses of foreign dignitaries are present. (14 FAM 532.1-1(A)a.)

The officials cited below in 14 FAM 532.1-2 must provide and sign a justification statement. For control and inspection purposes the authorizing officer should record and file the justification for authorizing representation travel. (14 FAM 532.1-1(C))

The chief of mission, or principal officer where there is no immediate supervisor [at] post, may, subject to the availability of post travel funds, authorize such travel. This authorization may be redelegated only to the deputy chief of mission. (14 FAM 532.1-2(A)a.)

Embassy Helsinki does not prepare a justification statement for representational travel. An April 5, 2011 memorandum from the DCM addresses travel by the Ambassador's spouse: "The majority of invitations that [*the ambassador*] receives include his spouse... Post will assume that as long as travel for representational purposes conforms to the requirements of 14 FAM 532.1, [*the spouse's*] travel with the Ambassador will be for official purposes. For out of country travel, post will follow the procedures in 14 FAM 532.1-2(B) and request advance approval from the assistant secretary for the regional bureau." This memorandum does not satisfy the FAM's requirement for a signed justification statement for each case of representation travel involving a family member.

Recommendation 9: Embassy Helsinki should prepare a justification statement for each case of representational travel by family members. (Action: Embassy Helsinki)

Property Management and Warehousing

The general services assistant, who is one of EUR's property management experts, oversees property management and warehousing. He is assisted by four staff members, three of whom perform warehouse as well as clerical duties. A contract moving company moved all office furniture and equipment from the annex to the swing spaces. Although the property management staff did not record these property moves, the unit submitted a property management report to the Department on May 10, 2011, just a few months after the original due date. It reported a nonexpendable property shortage of \$32,933, attributed in part to moving to the swing space. The property disposal authorization and survey report indicated that the property management division expects to find most of the reported missing items when it takes the next inventories.

The Malmi warehouse is much bigger than it needs to be for its role. This situation and the property management unit's accommodating attitude have resulted in the warehouse being filled with OBO materials, as well as \$85,000 of OBO representational property and excess embassy property. In addition, the warehouse hosts facility management workshops. The warehouse is untidy and disorganized. It is time to reorganize and rationalize the Malmi warehouse, so it can assume more important missions. Ridding the warehouse of excess property and materials will enlarge the staging space for construction projects planned for Helsinki and elsewhere.

Recommendation 10: Embassy Helsinki, in coordination with the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, should either make its representational property and construction, facility, and security materials available to other Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs posts, or dispose of them. (Action: Embassy Helsinki, in coordination with OBO)

Recommendation 11: Embassy Helsinki should dispose of the excess, nonexpendable property stored in the Malmi warehouse. (Action: Embassy Helsinki)

Most embassy employees do not sign their residential inventories during their tours, as required (14 FAM 416.3 a.). This oversight can lead to disagreements regarding the household property entrusted to them.

Informal Recommendation 13: Embassy Helsinki should require employees to sign residential property inventories in the first weeks after moving into permanent residences.

Customs and Shipping

The two-person customs and shipping section provides highly regarded services. Its Finnish Government interlocutors and commercial movers are described as good partners in the customs clearance process. If EUR makes the Malmi warehouse a regional warehouse for a number of countries (including Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Estonia), the customs and shipping section will be asked to clear shipments for these missions, without an increase in staff. The OIG concluded that the section will be able to do so.

Material Movement

The four-person material movement section handles all diplomatic post office mail shipments, as well as some pouch shipments into and out of Moscow and St. Petersburg. Commercial truckers transport mail and pouch shipments. Incoming mail is sorted and crated for its onward trips to Moscow and St. Petersburg. Embassy Moscow is responsible for the respective trucking charges, which are based on shipment weights. Neither Embassy Moscow nor Consulate General St. Petersburg, however, contributes to the salary costs of the four ICASS warehouse employees at Embassy Helsinki. Embassy Helsinki will soon move from ICASS Lite to ICASS Standard. At that time, these costs need to be passed back to Embassy Moscow. The mission plans to enter into a memorandum of understanding with Moscow for these services.

Informal Recommendation 14: Embassy Helsinki, upon implementation of International Cooperative Administrative Support Services Standard, should invoice Embassy Moscow for the costs attributable to work performed by Malmi warehouse staff who support mail and pouch shipments to Moscow and St. Petersburg.

Facilities Management and Real Property

As the principal embassy point of contact for OBO, the facility manager has provided vital support to visiting OBO teams and has played a key role in the sewer project and preparation of the swing space. The facility management office performs its maintenance function well, despite a meager staff that consists of a carpenter, painter, electrician, gardener, and two custodians. Commercial vendors frequently assist.

Chancery buildings lack sophisticated equipment, such as chillers and heating systems. Buildings are warmed via exchangers that use city generated heat. There are two emergency electrical generators on the compound. With the major rehabilitation project, compound buildings will contain modern mechanical and electrical systems, which will require sophisticated facilities and preventive maintenance programs. With input from the facility manager, OBO will determine the mix of LE staff and commercial contractors needed. With the

large number of government owned offices and residential properties, the embassy could make a business case for prudent staffing increases or for establishing more contractual relationships.

The mission's safety, health, and fire protection program is inadequate, as is its occupational safety and health committee. Having abandoned the annex because of fire and safety concerns, the mission's employees now work in swing spaces without fire emergency plans. Such plans are particularly crucial for those employees in the commercial building swing space.

Informal Recommendation 15: Embassy Helsinki should activate its occupational safety and health committee and draw up fire emergency plans for the spaces occupied in commercial office buildings.

The Embassy Compound

The 2.96-acre embassy compound includes a government-owned chancery building, chancery annex, and the chief of mission residence. An OBO project to replace sewer lines in the three buildings has just been completed. The \$82 million major rehabilitation project includes constructing an addition to the annex that will serve as a controlled access area; demolishing the interior of the annex and reconstructing it as an unclassified building; refurbishing the chancery building; and upgrading the chief of mission residence. When completed, the project should enable the embassy to achieve Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design platinum status for the annex.

The Malmi Warehouse

The Malmi warehouse was established as a secure facility to serve Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Yekaterinburg. Today it is an unsecure warehouse serving Embassy Helsinki, with diplomatic post office mail responsibility for Moscow and St. Petersburg.

Human Resources

The inspection team found the human resources office to be minimally staffed; only two local employees serve the whole mission. When the human resources section moved to the swing space, some routine activities were sidetracked. For example, at least 15 LE staff evaluation reports are behind schedule. So that LE staff does not miss any within grade increases, the team puts placeholder reports in their folders, stating that the employees are performing adequately. This approach can perpetuate the problem, as rating officers postpone completing staff evaluations. The management officer has not forwarded to the DCM a list of delinquent ratings.

Recommendation 12: Embassy Helsinki should implement a system for completing locally employed staff performance appraisals, submit the names of delinquent filers to the deputy chief of mission, and prohibit placeholder reports. (Action: Embassy Helsinki)

Language Designated Positions

There are six language designated positions at Embassy Helsinki. Three are located in the political section, two are in public diplomacy, and one is in the consular section. Five of the six are designated at the 3/3 level (only the consular position is 2/2). The current PAO is a native speaker and uses the language frequently, as does the political officer in charge of domestic

politics. The consular officer uses Finnish for public diplomacy outreach, but almost never needs it for consular business. The other employees occupying language designated positions either do not use the Finnish language or use it sparingly, since English is widely spoken in Finland at all levels of society. While there is clearly a value in diplomats speaking the local language, expertise in Finnish is not essential to the work of most of the officers who have learned it. The Department estimates that Finnish language training costs between \$105,000 and \$125,000 per student. The U.S. Government could realize savings of up to \$500,000 per assignment cycle by reducing Finnish language training.

Recommendation 13: Embassy Helsinki should convert four of its language designated positions to non-language designated positions. (Action: Embassy Helsinki)

Value-Added Tax Reimbursements

Like many other European capitals, Helsinki is expensive. To compensate, mission employees receive a 60 percent cost-of-living allowance, based on a periodic retail price survey. However, the survey does not take into account the value-added tax refunded to employees by the Foreign Ministry. In Finland, virtually all purchases are eligible for value-added tax reimbursements of between 9 percent and 23 percent of the price, and refunds are relatively easy to obtain. In the first 9 months of 2010, the mission's employees received approximately \$200,000 in value-added tax reimbursements. The OIG team also found that the Bureau of Administration's Office of Allowances does not regularly consider value-added tax reimbursements when determining a post's cost-of-living allowance.

Recommendation 14: The Bureau of Administration Office of Allowances should develop and implement procedures to factor value-added tax reimbursements into Embassy Helsinki's cost-of-living allowance calculations. (Action: A)

Locally Employed Staff

(b) (5) per Finnish law, employees with children under the age of 8 can work (and are paid proportionately) as few as 30 hours per week. Backup staff must be identified and trained when this situation occurs. In the management office, for instance, the budget and fiscal specialist occasionally fills in for the travel assistant. In other positions, the backups have not been handled smoothly, causing gaps in coverage for important functions.

Informal Recommendation 16: Embassy Helsinki should clearly delineate backup responsibilities for employees who have shortened work weeks, and should provide the backup employees with the appropriate training.

As noted previously, the perception that their health care benefits are no longer in line with comparators (b) (5) Finland has a national health care system, but Finnish law may now require companies to provide private health care to their employees. The embassy is consulting with counsel to determine applicability of this law to the U.S. mission.

Financial Management

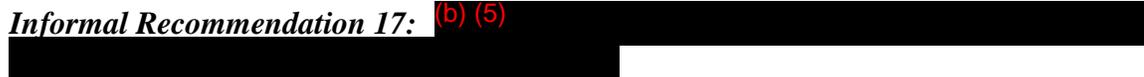
The financial management section has only four LE employees, all with substantial experience and long service with the mission. The management counselor serves as the financial management officer.

Cashiering

(b) (5)



Informal Recommendation 17: (b) (5)



A reconciliation of the cash on hand validated the embassy's funds accounting. Finland is becoming a cashless society. Credit cards and electronic funds transfers are used so regularly that cash payments are mostly reserved for tourists. Even the mission's American employees simply have their funds for in-country purchases directly deposited into their local bank accounts, thus nearly eliminating the need for accommodation exchange. Most accommodation exchange transactions are performed for visitors to Helsinki.

Budgeting

In FY 2010, the mission's program budget was about \$3.3 million. In FY 2011, the embassy received its full-year budget on May 16—8.5 months into the fiscal year. Many discretionary programs such as training, awards, and travel were put on hold for this entire time, (b) (5)



International Cooperative Administrative Support Services

Aside from the Department, there are only three other agencies in the mission: the Department of Defense, the U.S. Foreign Commercial Service, and the International Broadcasting Bureau. ICASS budget for FY 2010 was \$5,844,300, and the Department paid over 81 percent of that total. There was no carryover of ICASS funds into FY 2011, although some value-added tax reimbursements were received after the end of the fiscal year and will be utilized for FY 2011 purchases.

As mentioned earlier, Embassy Helsinki is an ICASS Lite post. The ICASS Service Center has decided to convert the embassy to an ICASS Standard post, and all agencies have agreed. The senior financial specialist has received ICASS training and is knowledgeable about ICASS Standard. Some members of the management team and other agency representatives, however, do not have the knowledge to initiate the new system. A transition year will enable the mission to better understand ICASS Standard. During this time, additional training is required.

Informal Recommendation 18: Embassy Helsinki should educate mission employees in International Cooperative Administrative Support Services Standard during the year it is transitioning from International Cooperative Administrative Support Services Lite to International Cooperative Administrative Support Services Standard.

The Defense Attaché is the chairperson of the ICASS council. In fact, this position has been held by the Defense Attaché and his predecessor for 5 years. The ICASS handbook recommends that the ICASS chair rotate regularly among the participating agencies.

Informal Recommendation 19: Embassy Helsinki should regularly rotate the International Cooperative Administrative Support Services council chairperson.

The OIG team also found that the ICASS chairperson had not received ICASS training before assuming his responsibilities.

Informal Recommendation 20: Embassy Helsinki should provide International Cooperative Administrative Support Services training for the next International Cooperative Administrative Support Services council chairperson before he or she assumes the position's responsibilities.

Representation

In FY 2010, Embassy Helsinki received \$48,400 in representational funds, of which \$9,200 was reserved for PAS and \$3,500 was returned at the end of the fiscal year. The remaining \$35,700 was spread appropriately throughout the mission, with each office using a portion of the amount. The Ambassador utilized about one-third, which is reasonable. In FY 2011, Embassy Helsinki received \$44,900 in representation funds.

Information Management and Information Security

Embassy Helsinki's IM program has been hampered by inadequate management and leadership for several years. Actions by the previous IM officer led to a number of instances of waste. The unit has implemented short-term remedies to allow operations to continue. An outstanding, second-tour IM specialist served as the acting IM officer for a number of months. To his credit, a number of issues have been addressed and the program has begun to improve. The newly arrived IM officer is eager to continue moving the program in a positive direction.

The void in previous management led to multiple failures during the mission's renovation project. Lack of planning during the transition resulted in a disruption in IM operations. The telephone network is still struggling and remains a priority of the management section. The unit staff's morale is beginning to recover with the arrival of the new IM officer.

The IM operations are located in the main chancery building. Support is provided to several off-site operations spread throughout the city. These include: the Fulbright Center, the British Embassy, Vilhonkatu building, Information Resource Center (known as the American Resource Center), and Malmi warehouse. Providing support to these far-flung offices is challenging.

The OIG team identified several areas in IM operations that require immediate attention. These areas include management of the mission's dedicated Internet network, removable media, server room cabling, communication contracts, telephone operations, and training. Information security issues are covered in the classified annex of this report.

Dedicated Internet Network Management

The embassy is using multiple, off-the-shelf Ethernet routers to support the OpenNet network. The routers are not Department approved and configured. A recent regional computer security officer visit identified the need to replace the routers with Department approved network switches. The IM officer has replaced four of the seven routers. (b) (5)

Recommendation 15: Embassy Helsinki should replace all nonapproved Ethernet routers with Department approved routers. (Action: Embassy Helsinki)

Embassy Helsinki has multiple dedicated Internet networks. The networks were established to provide OpenNet connectivity (using remote access devices) during the annex renovation project. Many of the dedicated Internet networks are no longer required for operations; the embassy has agreed to consolidate them, as outlined in 5 FAM 872.1.

Informal Recommendation 21: Embassy Helsinki should consolidate all dedicated Internet networks, based on Bureau of Information Resource Management criteria.

Communications Contracts

Previous management hastily established the embassy's cellular phone contract, which resulted in excessive costs. The IM section has drafted a new cellular phone contract and is awaiting procurement action. Other questionable IM service contracts may need recompetition.

Recommendation 16: Embassy Helsinki should conduct an analysis of all communications contracts and should recompile any contracts that are not in the interest of the mission. (Action: Embassy Helsinki)

Unclassified Server Room Cabling

Ongoing, high-priority projects have left the information technology staff with minimal time for cabling, and network cables in the unclassified server rooms are not organized and labeled appropriately. Regulations (5 FAH-9 H-381) require IM staff to label infrastructure and equipment components uniquely and legibly. Inadequately documented network cabling could hamper the staff's ability to fix network connectivity problems, and it increases the possibility of unauthorized devices being introduced into the network.

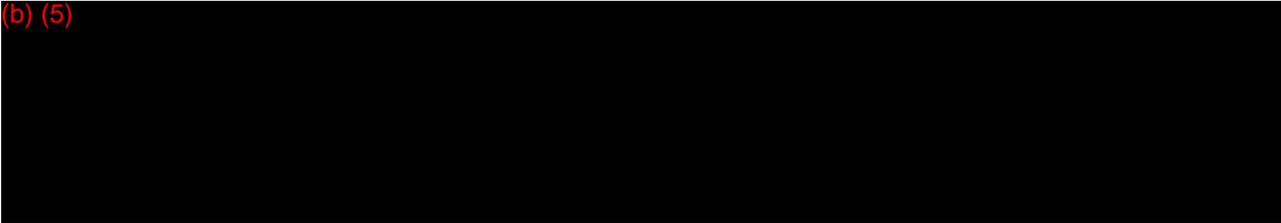
Recommendation 17: Embassy Helsinki, in coordination with the Regional Information Management Center in Frankfurt, should organize and appropriately label the unclassified server room network cabling. (Action: Embassy Helsinki, in coordination with RIMC)

E-Services

The e-Services application is a useful tool for managing administrative requests and services. The management office drafted, but did not disseminate, a management notice on the e-Services application. Even though the staff has been following the proposed guidance for the past year, having the formal notice would increase the use of this application in the embassy community.

Informal Recommendation 22: Embassy Helsinki should complete and publish the e-Services management notice.

(b) (5)



Recommendation 18: (b) (5)



Off-Site Support

The IM staff does not regularly provide maintenance service to the Malmi warehouse. The warehouse operation includes 20 workstations and an OpenNet server. Preventive maintenance visits to a mission's off-site locations are standard throughout the Department. According to IM management, lack of attention has been a primary reason for the disparity. Without regular site visits, the IM operations at the Malmi warehouse are susceptible to service interruptions and vulnerabilities.

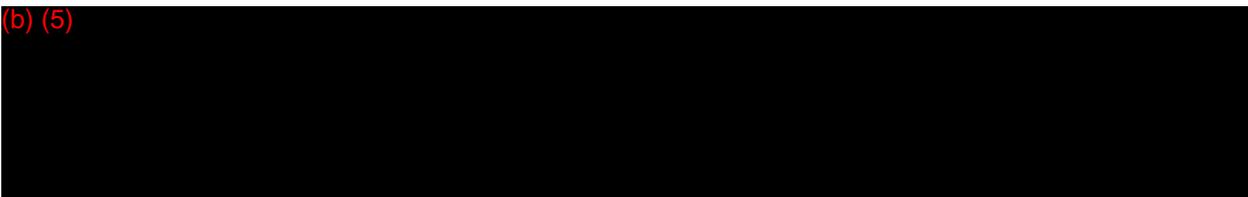
Informal Recommendation 23: Embassy Helsinki should conduct twice monthly maintenance visits to the Malmi warehouse.

Handling Backup Media

Local IM staff members carry Sensitive But Unclassified OpenNet network backup tapes from the chancery building to the old Fulbright office for off-site storage weekly, which creates the potential for media mishandling. Regulations state (12 FAM 622.1-7) that all Sensitive But Unclassified media must be handled by cleared U.S. citizens when being transported between facilities.

Informal Recommendation 24: Embassy Helsinki should designate only those employees who are cleared U.S. citizens to transport Sensitive But Unclassified OpenNet backup media between facilities.

(b) (5)



Informal Recommendation 25: (b) (5)

Training of Systems Staff

The IM staff does not have a formal training plan. The OIG team reviewed the training records and found them deficient. Helsinki's deployed systems are too complex for learning through trial and error. Network administrators should have appropriate training through formal courses provided by the Foreign Service Institute. Without continuous technical training, the IM staff will be unable to keep their knowledge and skills up to date.

Recommendation 19: Embassy Helsinki should provide training to all information management staff members, according to their job functions and designated duties. (Action: Embassy Helsinki)

Inaccurate Position Grading

A number of the LE staff positions in the IM section are graded at a lower level than the grades for similar positions at comparably sized missions. The disparity is due to a lack of attention by previous IM management. In addition, none of the LE information systems staff positions reflect current duties and responsibilities.

Informal Recommendation 26: Embassy Helsinki should rewrite all position descriptions in the information resource management section to accurately reflect current duties and responsibilities, and then reevaluate the positions to determine their correct grade.

Telephone Operator

Customer service survey scores indicate the mission's dissatisfaction with the embassy telephone service. Several staff members complained that they have often been unable to contact the operator. The mission has one telephone operator, with the IM staff as backup. Management should evaluate operator service and implement a process for providing effective telephone service during business hours, including a formal backup operator plan.

Recommendation 20: Embassy Helsinki should make sure a telephone operator is accessible to the embassy and incoming callers during working hours. (Action: Embassy Helsinki)

The telephone operator estimates that the majority of the embassy's incoming calls are related to consular affairs. The consular section's policy is to deal with routine, visa related inquiries through email. Normally, the telephone operator directs visa callers to an information phone tree or the consulate's Web site, while directing American citizens services inquiries to the consular section's cell phone. The telephone operator is expected to use her judgment to determine whether to connect a call through directly to the consular section. The consular section should create clear, written instructions regarding how to handle consular calls, so that the operators do not have to decide on their own about how to direct incoming calls.

Informal Recommendation 27: Embassy Helsinki should create clear, written guidance for the telephone operator to use regarding how to handle incoming consular calls.

Information Management Internship Program

In previous years, Embassy Helsinki's IM program included an unpaid internship program. The program proved to be invaluable during the vacancy of a key systems administrator. Management also has hired previous interns with knowledge and experience of Department systems. Internship programs in general have been identified as a best practice at other missions.

Informal Recommendation 28: Embassy Helsinki should reestablish its information management internship program.

Quality of Life

(b) (5)



Community Liaison Office

The new CLO coordinator in Helsinki faces multiple challenges, (b) (5)



She is a first-time CLO coordinator and has no formal training. Although assigned to a 20-hour work week, the CLO coordinator is expected to take over all the tasks (including producing an embassy newsletter) that previously were handled by two people sharing a 40-hour job. Adding to these already significant challenges, the CLO coordinator began work in January 2011, in the middle of the long Finnish winter, and in the middle of the mission's move to poorly prepared swing spaces around the city.

Informal Recommendation 29: Embassy Helsinki should send its community liaison office coordinator to the next available regional training session.

The CLO coordinator has instituted some important changes, especially in planning the sponsorship program for newly arrived officers, which had been the object of numerous complaints. She will need to make more information about educational options available to arriving personnel, another area of dissatisfaction. Several spouses in the community have established an ad hoc advisory committee to assist the CLO coordinator. Fortunately, embassy management recently decided to advertise for the other part-time CLO coordinator position. With another CLO coordinator, the office will be able to expand the quantity and quality of information provided to mission personnel and increase community building activities to improve morale.

Schools

Overall, embassy parents are happy (b)(5)(b)(6)



Some parents, however, expressed strong dissatisfaction with the school's admission policies and what they regard as insufficient embassy attention to those policies. Parents whose children did not get into the school also claimed the embassy provided minimal information on viable alternatives.

(b)(5)(b)(6)



It is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges and the European Council of International Schools and has an international

baccalaureate program. Most embassy parents are happy with the curriculum, faculty, and after school activities. The appointment of a very experienced school director in July 2009 largely resolved earlier complaints about communication difficulties between the school and the parents.

Two problems remain. One is that embassy children are not guaranteed a place at the school, especially if their applications are received late. The school's director told the Department's regional education officer that the problem lay with the school's admissions officer, who resisted any attempt to "jump the queue" or otherwise grant priority to embassy children. Given the large sums the school has received from the U.S. Government—over \$815,000 since 1975, including more than \$32,000 in recent security grants—and the number of U.S. Government children at the school, this issue merits attention from higher levels of mission management.

Informal Recommendation 30: Embassy Helsinki should work with management (b)(5)(b)(6) to establish a process whereby embassy dependents are given priority placement in the school, as stipulated in the agreements for grants the U.S. Government has given to the school.

Some parents also expressed concern over the lack of information on alternative schools. The mission employees with school-age children need to receive more information about schooling in Finland, including alternatives (b)(5)(b)(6) in advance of their arrival.

Informal Recommendation 31: Embassy Helsinki should obtain and provide to employees with school age children information about educational options, and should provide this information in time for parents to make decisions about schooling.

American Embassy Employee Association

The mission's American Embassy Employee Association is once again solvent. After a period of financial losses, the organization is profitable, due to the elimination of its cafeteria entity. An audit completed for the FY 2010 substantiated these facts, which suggests that it would be inadvisable for the embassy to let the association run the cafeteria again.

Informal Recommendation 32: Embassy Helsinki should not automatically reengage the American Embassy Employee Association to operate a cafeteria, once the annex reopens.

Additionally the embassy does not have a license agreement with the association for logistical support.

Informal Recommendation 33: Embassy Helsinki should complete a license agreement with the American Embassy Employee Association.

Health Unit

The health unit is staffed by an American citizen LE registered nurse, who has been in the job for 12 years. The nurse receives good support from Embassy Moscow's regional medical officer and regional medical officer psychiatrist, as well as other medical consulting support. The

regional medical officers typically had visited twice a year; visits have become more frequent recently due to construction. For approximately 8 months, the health unit, which had been in the basement of the chancery, has been located in a temporary structure on the embassy compound. The medical unit is crowded and lacks a private consultation space.

Survey scores indicated some dissatisfaction with the medical unit. The nurse's primary asset is her relationship with and access to medical care providers in Helsinki. A referral is normally required to gain access to a Finnish hospital. Finland's hospitals generally are specialized and do not provide a wide range of care, but the quality of care is comparable to that in the United States.

Adequate medical supplies and equipment are not in an offsite safe haven. The few medical supplies and equipment on hand are expired.

Informal Recommendation 34: Embassy Helsinki should obtain and position appropriate medical supplies and equipment for an offsite safe haven.

Equal Employment Opportunity

The embassy has an adequate Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) program. The EEO counselor has been trained and is aware of her responsibilities. An EEO LE staff liaison has been named. There have been no EEO complaints during the last 3 years. As a result, attention to the issue may have waned.

Informal Recommendation 35: Embassy Helsinki should emphasize, at a country team meeting and by management notice, the importance of Equal Employment Opportunity in the mission community.

While information regarding EEO is posted in some areas, the move to alternate workplaces has meant that other areas still do not have bulletin boards on which to post EEO literature.

Informal Recommendation 36: Embassy Helsinki should post current Equal Employment Opportunity information in prominent locations in all temporary building work spaces.

Management Controls

The DCM designated the management counselor as the post management controls coordinator. The 2010 annual chief of mission management controls statement of assurance was completed in July 2010. That report disclosed no significant management areas requiring attention. In preparation for the report, the mission conducted an internal risk assessment and determined that activities were conducted in accordance with law, government regulation, and post policies.

Much has changed since that time. The move to four outlying locations has created vulnerabilities that were not present prior to the completion of last year's statement of assurance. Many of these vulnerabilities are discussed throughout this report. To the management counselor's credit, the embassy developed a 2011 management strategic plan that documents over 20 areas where improvements are needed. This document should serve as a blueprint for the 2011 chief of mission management controls statement of assurance. The embassy has not conducted a comprehensive risk assessment prior to completion of this year's statement of assurance. This risk analysis, coupled with the management strategic plan, should form the basis for this year's assurance memorandum to the EUR Assistant Secretary.

Recommendation 21: Embassy Helsinki should conduct a comprehensive risk assessment prior to submitting the 2011 chief of mission management controls statement of assurance to the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs. (Action: Embassy Helsinki)

Consular Management Controls

The consular section takes management controls seriously and carefully documents them. The move to the swing space has complicated accountability, because for several months consular staff collected funds in the otherwise vacated chancery annex, and the Class B cashier was in swing space across town. As a result, in January 2011, the financial management office issued the "daily" cash receipts (Optional Form-158) only once every 3 days. Even after the consular section moved into the swing space in April 2011, the Class B cashier issued OF-158s on only 8 days of the month, due to a scheduling conflict between the consular and financial management offices. In any case, the section did not issue Optional Form-158s the day after receiving the cash from the consular subcashier, as required by 7 FAH-1 H-771.2-7. During the inspection, the consular section and financial management office agreed to a schedule of deposits that allows for daily deposit of cash and next-day processing of the Optional Form-158s, and they were consistently following that schedule.

Machine Readable Visa Fees

Because Finns extensively use electronic payments, they pay the machine readable visa fee directly into an account expressly set up for that purpose. The proof of payment can be any sort of document that shows the successful deposit. Because of the possibility of fraud, the consular section confirms all third-country applicants' deposits and a small sample of Finnish applicants' deposits. The procedure seems to work well, and the section has not detected any fraud. On occasion, however, the consular subcashier accepts payment for machine readable visa

fees at the interview window, without determining why the applicant has not used the off-site collection facility. This arrangement causes additional work for the consular subcashier, the Class B cashier (because machine readable visa fees must be cash), and the accountable consular officer.

Informal Recommendation 37: Embassy Helsinki should cease allowing visa applicants to pay their machine readable visa fees at the consular section, except for exigent cases.

The agreement with Nordea, the Finnish bank that collects the machine readable visa fees, calls for the receipts to be collected and deposited into the U.S. disbursing office account every week, rather than on the next business day, as required (7 FAH-1 H-752 a.). The result is that the U.S. Government loses use of the money that is collected for consular fees, and some fees are credited to the U.S. Government well after the consular section has rendered the service.

Informal Recommendation 38: Embassy Helsinki should revise its agreement with Nordea Bank, so that machine readable visa fees deposited into the consular sections account are moved into the U.S. disbursing officer's account daily, rather than weekly.

The accountable consular officer routinely checks the amount of cash received by the U.S. disbursing officer against consular visa processing, and has not found any discrepancies.

Other Consular Fee Issues

While the section collects the majority of its fees electronically, an unusual number of collections (considering that Finland has a largely cashless economy) are made in cash. The consular staff opined that the public did not understand that it is possible to pay by credit card. The section agreed to increase publicity of the credit card option, in order to provide better service to the consular public, as outlined in 7 FAH-1 H-761 a.

The consular section uses the exchange rate notified by the U.S. Embassy in Paris, as required by 7 FAH-1 H-724.2 c. In January 2011, the rate was set at 0.75 euros to the U.S. dollar. During the month, however, the U.S. disbursing officer's daily rate varied from 0.74 to 0.77 euros to the dollar. In the middle of January, the daily rate was over the consular rate of 0.75, contrary to 7 FAH-1 H-724.2 a. The U.S. Embassy in Paris did not raise the consular exchange rate in mid January, as the U.S. dollar strengthened. As a result, the U.S. Government collected less money in U.S. dollars for its consular transactions than is shown on the schedule of consular fees at all U.S. embassies that follow Embassy Paris's exchange rate.

Recommendation 22: The Bureau of Consular Affairs should keep the Euro Zone consular exchange rate at or above the U.S. disbursing officer's daily rate of exchange rate at all times. (Action: CA)

List of Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Embassy Helsinki should work with its locally employed staff to establish a representative, elected, locally employed staff committee, and should meet with this committee on a regular basis to recognize and resolve issues of interest to locally employed staff. (Action: Embassy Helsinki)

Recommendation 2: Embassy Helsinki should bring its political/economic section's files into compliance with Department of State regulations on records management. (Action: Embassy Helsinki)

Recommendation 3: Embassy Helsinki, in coordination with the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, should install sound absorbing materials on both sides of the consular interview windows, including the floor, ceiling, and walls. (Action: Embassy Helsinki, in coordination with OBO)

Recommendation 4: (b) (5)

Recommendation 5: (b) (5)

Recommendation 6: The Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs should provide Embassy Helsinki with guidelines and procedures for allocating and controlling the League of Green Embassies Funds. (Action: EUR, in coordination with Embassy Helsinki)

Recommendation 7: Embassy Helsinki should develop and submit to the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations a business case for selling one of the four Kavallintie properties and retaining the proceeds of the sale to rehabilitate the remaining three properties. (Action: Embassy Helsinki, in coordination with OBO)

Recommendation 8: Embassy Helsinki should either prepare the contract for Finnish workers' compensation, group life insurance, and unemployment insurance, or request that the Frankfurt Regional Procurement Support Office handle the contracting action. (Action: Embassy Helsinki)

Recommendation 9: Embassy Helsinki should prepare a justification statement for each case of representational travel by family members. (Action: Embassy Helsinki)

Recommendation 10: Embassy Helsinki, in coordination with Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, should either make its representational property and construction, facility, and security materials available to other Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs posts, or dispose of them. (Action: Embassy Helsinki, in coordination with OBO)

Recommendation 11: Embassy Helsinki should dispose of the excess, nonexpendable property stored in the Malmi warehouse. (Action: Embassy Helsinki)

Recommendation 12: Embassy Helsinki should implement a system for completing locally employed staff performance appraisals, submit the names of delinquent filers to the deputy chief of mission, and prohibit placeholder reports. (Action: Embassy Helsinki)

Recommendation 13: Embassy Helsinki should convert four of its language designated positions to non-language designated positions. (Action: Embassy Helsinki)

Recommendation 14: The Bureau of Administration Office of Allowances should develop and implement procedures to factor value-added tax reimbursements into Embassy Helsinki's cost-of-living allowance calculations. (Action: A)

Recommendation 15: Embassy Helsinki should replace all nonapproved Ethernet routers with Department approved routers. (Action: Embassy Helsinki)

Recommendation 16: Embassy Helsinki should conduct an analysis of all communications contracts and should recompute any contracts that are not in the interest of the mission. (Action: Embassy Helsinki)

Recommendation 17: Embassy Helsinki, in coordination with the Regional Information Management Center in Frankfurt, should organize and appropriately label the unclassified server room network cabling. (Action: Embassy Helsinki, in coordination with RIMC)

Recommendation 18: (b) (5)

Recommendation 19: Embassy Helsinki should provide training to all information management staff members, according to their job functions and designated duties. (Action: Embassy Helsinki)

Recommendation 20: Embassy Helsinki should make sure a telephone operator is accessible to the embassy and incoming callers during working hours. (Action: Embassy Helsinki)

Recommendation 21: Embassy Helsinki should conduct a comprehensive risk assessment prior to submitting the 2011 chief of mission management controls statement of assurance to the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs. (Action: Embassy Helsinki)

Recommendation 22: The Bureau of Consular Affairs should keep the Euro Zone consular exchange rate at or above the U.S. disbursing officer's daily rate of exchange rate at all times. (Action: CA)

List of 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: Embassy Helsinki should hold a country team meeting every other week at one of the temporary office spaces.

Informal Recommendation 2: Embassy Helsinki should coordinate with the Office of Nordic and Baltic Affairs, to develop and implement a revised reporting plan that reflects U.S. Government consumers' interest in more frequent reporting, including more economic reporting.

Informal Recommendation 3: Embassy Helsinki should examine its multiple social media sites and determine how many of them it can adequately maintain, developing those with largest audience share and eliminating others.

Informal Recommendation 4: Embassy Helsinki should develop a plan to tap private sector sources to continue or expand its new youth exchange program.

Informal Recommendation 5: Embassy Helsinki should require the public affairs officer-designate and the new assistant public affairs officer to take grants management training and obtain grants warrants prior to assuming their new positions.

Informal Recommendation 6: Embassy Helsinki should provide a visa referral class for all section chiefs, agency heads, and their office management specialists.

Informal Recommendation 7: Embassy Helsinki should require the Ambassador's office manager to provide the motor pool dispatcher with the Ambassador's weekend driver requirements by noon Friday, whenever possible.

Informal Recommendation 8: Embassy Helsinki should arrange for the drivers to take their required vision and physical examinations.

Informal Recommendation 9: Embassy Helsinki should return the mailroom clerk to his assigned position.

Informal Recommendation 10: (b) (5)

Informal Recommendation 11: Embassy Helsinki should meet with all individuals who participate in procurement and educate them about proper procurement procedures and how to avoid unauthorized commitments.

Informal Recommendation 12: Embassy Helsinki should determine the specific lighting requirements at the deputy chief of mission's residence and process this procurement.

Informal Recommendation 13: Embassy Helsinki should require employees to sign residential property inventories in the first weeks after moving into permanent residences.

Informal Recommendation 14: Embassy Helsinki, upon implementation of International Cooperative Administrative Support Services Standard, should invoice Embassy Moscow for the costs attributable to work performed by Malmi warehouse staff who support mail and pouch shipments to Moscow and St. Petersburg.

Informal Recommendation 15: Embassy Helsinki should activate its occupational safety and health committee and draw up fire emergency plans for the spaces occupied in commercial office buildings.

Informal Recommendation 16: Embassy Helsinki should clearly delineate backup responsibilities for employees who have shortened work weeks, and should provide the backup employees with the appropriate training.

Informal Recommendation 17: (b) (5)

Informal Recommendation 18: Embassy Helsinki should educate mission employees in International Cooperative Administrative Support Services Standard during the year it is transitioning from International Cooperative Administrative Support Services Lite to International Cooperative Administrative Support Services Standard.

Informal Recommendation 19: Embassy Helsinki should regularly rotate the International Cooperative Administrative Support Services council chairperson.

Informal Recommendation 20: Embassy Helsinki should provide International Cooperative Administrative Support Services training for the next International Cooperative Administrative Support Services council chairperson before he or she assumes the position's responsibilities.

Informal Recommendation 21: Embassy Helsinki should consolidate all dedicated Internet networks, based on Bureau of Information Resource Management criteria.

Informal Recommendation 22: Embassy Helsinki should complete and publish the e-Services management notice.

Informal Recommendation 23: Embassy Helsinki should conduct twice monthly maintenance visits to the Malmi warehouse.

Informal Recommendation 24: Embassy Helsinki should designate only those employees who are cleared U.S. citizens to transport Sensitive But Unclassified OpenNet backup media between facilities.

Informal Recommendation 25: (b) (5)

Informal Recommendation 26: Embassy Helsinki should rewrite all position descriptions in the information resource management section to accurately reflect current duties and responsibilities, and then reevaluate the positions to determine their correct grade.

Informal Recommendation 27: Embassy Helsinki should create clear, written guidance for the telephone operator to use regarding how to handle incoming consular calls.

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Principal Officials

	Name	Arrival Date
Ambassador	Bruce J. Oreck	08/2009
Deputy Chief of Mission	Daniel J. Hall	08/2010
<i>Chiefs of Sections:</i>		
Administrative	Russell W. Jones	08/2009
Consular	Eric S. Meyer	08/2008
Political/Economic	Scott A. Brandon	08/2008
Public Affairs	Marjut H. Robinson	08/2010
Regional Security	Joseph A. Castro	08/2010
<i>Other Agencies:</i>		
Department of Defense	Col. David B. Royal	03/2009
Foreign Commercial Service	Nicholas R. Kuchova	09/2009

Abbreviations

BBG	Broadcasting Board of Governors
CLO	Community liaison office
DCM	Deputy chief of mission
Department	Department of State
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunity
ESTH	Environment, science, technology, and health
EUR	Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs
GSO	General services officer
ICASS	International Cooperative Administrative Support Services
IM	Information management
LE	Locally employed
MSRP	Mission Strategic and Resource Plan
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OBO	Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations
OIG	Office of Inspector General
PAO	Public affairs officer
PAS	Public affairs section

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