



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

**Office of Inspections**

**Inspection of  
Embassy Nassau, The Bahamas**

**Report Number ISP-I-12-08A, January 2012**

**Office of Inspector General**

**~~Important Notice~~**

~~This report is intended solely for the official use of the Department of State or the Broadcasting Board of Governors, or any agency or organization receiving a copy directly from the Office of Inspector General. No secondary distribution may be made, in whole or in part, outside the Department of State or the Broadcasting Board of Governors, by them or by other agencies or organizations, without prior authorization by the Inspector General. Public availability of the document will be determined by the Inspector General under the U.S. Code, 5 U.S.C. 552. Improper disclosure of this report may result in criminal, civil, or administrative penalties.~~

## **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 BBG, and Congress with systematic and independent evaluations of the operations of the Department and the BBG. Inspections cover three broad areas, consistent with Section 209 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980:

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

### **METHODOLOGY**

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



United States Department of State  
and the Broadcasting Board of Governors

*Office of Inspector General*

## PREFACE

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

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

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

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "H.W. Geisel". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Harold W. Geisel  
Deputy Inspector General

## Table of Contents

Key Judgments	1
Context	2
Executive Direction	3
Mission Strategic and Resource Plan and Public Diplomacy	3
Security and Emergency Preparedness	4
Equal Employment Opportunity	4
Entry-Level Officer Program	5
Policy and Program Implementation	6
Political/Economic/Commercial	6
Public Diplomacy	9
Consular Operations	10
Consular Agency Turks and Caicos	13
Law Enforcement Cooperation	15
Resource Management	16
Management Section	17
International Cooperative Administrative Support Services	18
Human Resources	19
General Services Office	20
Financial Management Operations	23
Information Management and Information Security	25
Quality of Life	28
Community Liaison Office	28
International Schools	28
Health Unit	28
Employee Recreation Association	29
Management Controls	30
Ambassadorial Absence from Post	30
List of Recommendations	34
List of Informal Recommendations	37
Principal Officials	40
Abbreviations	41

## Key Judgments

- The Ambassador and new deputy chief of mission (DCM) are emerging strongly from a period of dysfunctional leadership and management. (b) (5)  
[REDACTED]
- The Ambassador's authorized absences from post exceeded those allowed in guidelines issued by the Under Secretary for Management. The embassy and the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs did not follow Department of State (Department) procedures for vetting these absences.
- The regional security office is performing well in this critical crime threat post. (b) (5)  
[REDACTED]
- The large and diverse law enforcement community in Mission Bahamas works well together, under the Ambassador's leadership, to counter threats to U.S. national security.
- The consular section provides excellent services in a large geographic area of responsibility. However, its efforts have been hampered by the embassy's inability to establish a consular agency in the Turks and Caicos Islands.
- The public affairs section (PAS), invigorated with the arrival of its first American public affairs officer in nearly two decades, manages an effective and robust outreach effort, though it should develop a network of exchange program alumni.
- The management section is also emerging from a difficult period, as evidenced by lower-than-average customer satisfaction scores. The DCM and new management officer are working to improve internal coordination among management sections and provide better service to employees, including those stationed at Freeport, Grand Bahama Island.
- Political and economic cables reflect excellent access to Bahamians at every level of society and government. Drafters, however, consistently neglect to add context or analysis to explain how events affect U.S. interests.

All findings and recommendations in this report are based on conditions observed during the on-site review and the standards and policies then in effect. The report does not comment at length on areas where OIG did not identify problems that need to be corrected.

The inspection took place in Washington, DC, between September 13 and 28, 2011; in Nassau, The Bahamas, between September 29 and October 12, 2011; and in Providenciales, Turks and Caicos, on October 2, 2011. (b) (6)  
[REDACTED]

## Context

The Bahamas is a critical partner in ongoing efforts to ensure the security of the south-east flank of the United States. As it fights drug and human trafficking with U.S. and international support, The Bahamas seeks to maintain its status as a global financial center and as an important tourist destination. The United States and The Bahamas share a close historical relationship based on democratic values, economic and cultural ties, and a common desire for a peaceful and stable Caribbean.

Consisting of some 29 major and hundreds of smaller islands spread across 5,000 square miles, The Bahamas is situated nearly equidistant from Florida and Cuba. For centuries, it has been a favorite transit region and harbor for illegal sea-borne activities. Its 330,000 inhabitants, two-thirds of whom live on New Providence, include a large illegal Haitian community with its own cultural identity and language.

A member of the British Commonwealth, The Bahamas maintains close relations with the United Kingdom and is an active member of the Caribbean Community. Chinese diplomatic engagement has grown in the past decade, largely through massive development projects. The country maintains full diplomatic relations with Cuba as well as close relations with the United States.

The Bahamian economy relies heavily on international tourism and offshore finance. With a per capita income of \$22,000 (2010), The Bahamas is ranked as the third wealthiest country in the Americas after the United States and Canada. The world economic downturn in 2008–2010 seriously affected tourism, which generates approximately 60 percent of The Bahamas gross domestic product and employs half of its labor force. U.S. tourists make up 90 percent of the 5 million annual visitors. The Bahamas has a competitive tax regime to attract foreign financial entities. It has no income, value-added, or corporate tax, relying instead on import duties, fees, and property taxes for its revenue.

Bilateral relations with the United States remain close. As a neighbor, The Bahamas stability and prosperity are important to the United States. Cooperation has centered on antinarcotics, illegal migration, regional security, and facilitation of travel to and from The Bahamas. The embassy also has responsibility for consular relations with the Turks and Caicos Islands, some 400 miles southeast of Nassau.

Embassy Nassau hosts a complement of 22 direct-hire Department employees (plus 6 Marine security guards) who also support and coordinate the activities of 4 other Cabinet departments, comprising 115 U.S. direct hires. Its staffing totals some 154 American personnel and 61 locally employed (LE) staff. The chancery is a poorly designed building with few common areas and little setback. The Department has scheduled it for replacement in 2016. Most of the large Department of Homeland Security presence is at international airports in Nassau and Freeport. Freeport is located on Grand Bahama Island, 120 miles or an hour flight from Nassau. The embassy had a limited-scope inspection in 2007.

## Executive Direction

The mission is led by an active noncareer Ambassador at post for 2 years and an experienced DCM at post for less than 90 days. The two are forging a good team, with the Ambassador focused principally on public outreach activities associated with the Mission Strategic and Resource Plan (MSRP) and the DCM on needed improvements in internal management. Mission personnel are encouraged by the new front office spirit. The Ambassador chairs weekly country team and law enforcement working group meetings, which the DCM attends. Meetings are collegial, with team members comfortable to exchange views and offer informal commentary.

The embassy is recovering from an extended period of dysfunctional leadership and mismanagement, which has caused problems throughout the embassy. Programs such as entry-level officer mentoring, Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), and the Federal Women's Program floundered. Critical security upgrades in embassy housing were not made, and the U.S. Government paid rent for 2 years on a vacant consular agency office in the Turks and Caicos Islands. (b) (5)

The Ambassador had not had frequent policy-level interaction with the Department or other Washington agencies. At the beginning of her tenure, she relied unduly on her former DCM to attend to day-to-day contacts with the desk and other offices in the Department. Interviews in Washington likewise revealed that the front office of the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs and other Washington agencies were not in regular contact with the Ambassador about the conduct of her mission. This lack of regular contact contributed to the Ambassador's sense of isolation from the Department.

According to numerous accounts from mission personnel, the previous DCM did not provide the Ambassador or the rest of the staff with adequate support and had a management style many found intimidating. The Ambassador did not take effective action to counteract the perception of an unwelcoming front office and instead focused her activities outside the embassy. Her extensive travel out of country and preference to work from the Ambassador's residence for a significant portion of the work day contributed to a perception of indifference, (b) (5) The Ambassador and new DCM recognize that corrective actions to address morale are essential and had already begun instituting informal steps to restore morale prior to this inspection. Both have solicited and welcomed the OIG team's suggestions to assist them in this regard.<sup>1</sup>

**Recommendation 1:** (b) (5)

### Mission Strategic and Resource Plan and Public Diplomacy

Embassy Nassau follows its FY 2012 MSRP plan, which establishes six main goals with appropriate performance indicators. The plan attaches priority to law enforcement and antiterrorism efforts and to public diplomacy activities meant to deepen already excellent U.S.

<sup>1</sup>Following the OIG inspection, the Ambassador resigned her position and departed post on November 21, 2011.

relations with The Bahamas by emphasizing American interest in the welfare and civil society of Bahamians. Given the high level of U.S. tourism to The Bahamas, the MSRP also focuses on protecting American citizen interests and with working to ensure that Bahamians can visit the United States securely.

The Ambassador, with the able assistance of the PAS, has implemented an impressive outreach program in support of MSRP goals. By drawing on her personal contacts with prominent Americans, organizing civil society-related conferences, highlighting her travel to outlying Bahamian islands, and undertaking activities to promote business connections between American and Bahamian communities, she and her staff have improved the embassy's reputation among Bahamians. This, in turn, has fostered a close bilateral environment that is conducive to excellent law enforcement cooperation. With the Ambassador's support, the new DCM intends to review MSRP indicators to determine the effectiveness of current activities and to recommend plan adjustments.

### **Security and Emergency Preparedness**

The Ambassador and DCM support a robust security program to counteract Nassau's critical crime threat. The passage of Hurricane Irene only 2 weeks before the inspection tested the mission's ability to prepare for and weather a serious emergency. Interagency coordination of evacuation plans revealed the need for improvement, but the overall response was effective in protecting mission personnel and property.

### **Equal Employment Opportunity**

The Ambassador and the DCM emphasized to the inspection team that they support the Department's EEO goals. The Ambassador recruited the current EEO counselor, but before the inspection there was no active EEO program in the embassy. A review of management notices for the 24 months prior to the inspection found none supporting EEO or publicly identifying the counselor. During the OIG inspection, the embassy established an EEO bulletin board, appointed a Federal Women's Program coordinator and a Foreign Service National EEO liaison, and issued a management notice on the EEO program to all staff. The current EEO counselor has not received mandatory training and is scheduled to depart post in May 2012. The total number of employees exceeds 200, including almost 100 U.S. direct hires from the Department of Homeland Security and the Drug Enforcement Administration. *Foreign Affairs Manual* regulation 3 FAM 1514.2 a. strongly encourages embassies with more than 50 employees to nominate a second EEO counselor. The designation of a second counselor would help (b) (5) provide continuity during transfers.

***Informal Recommendation 1:*** Embassy Nassau should provide training for the current Equal Employment Opportunity counselor at the next available opportunity.

***Informal Recommendation 2:*** Embassy Nassau should nominate a second Equal Employment Opportunity counselor for training and designation.

### **Entry-Level Officer Program**

The embassy's entry-level officer program has been neglected and is ineffective. Entry-level officers have come to rely on immediate supervisors for informal guidance. Front office engagement has been sporadic and unfocused. Entry-level officers have not been included regularly in mission representational events nor have regular discussion sessions been held. The new DCM is aware of this issue and has taken steps to address it.

## Policy and Program Implementation

### Political/Economic/Commercial

The combined political/economic/commercial section plays an important role in planning and drafting the MSRP. Three of the six MSRP goals are directly related to the section's portfolio: international crime, drug smuggling, and illegal migration; prevention and response to terrorism; and economic growth and development. The crime and terrorism portfolios require consistent and continuous cooperation with the six law enforcement entities in the mission.

More and better reporting is needed from the section. Political and economic cables reflected excellent access to Bahamians at every level of society and government. Drafters, however, consistently failed to include context and/or analysis to explain why events are important to U.S. interests. For example, cables on labor unrest or the impact of massive Chinese investment in The Bahamas were reported with little comment and no analysis.

Cables written in the past year show little political reporting or analysis on international crime, drug smuggling, and illegal migration or on prevention of terrorism, both of which are key MSRP goals. Although law enforcement agencies in the mission cover the operational end of those issues, the political section needs to provide analytical reporting on these goals. There was also no recent economic reporting on offshore financial or banking services, the second most important sector of the Bahamian economy.

***Informal Recommendation 3:*** Embassy Nassau should write a political/economic/commercial reporting plan that is tied to Mission Strategic and Resource Plan goals and includes information from law enforcement entities in the mission.

***Informal Recommendation 4:*** Embassy Nassau should increase the quality of its political/economic/commercial reporting by adding more context and analysis.

The summer transition reduced staffing temporarily in the political/economic/commercial section from six to two. Reporting suffered accordingly. All three political/economic officers and the office manager transferred, as did the narcotics affairs section officer. One of two LE staff members went on extended leave. The new political/economic chief arrived to find little institutional memory. His predecessor did not leave handover notes.

Since his arrival, the political/economic/commercial section chief has worked almost singlehandedly on projects that enhance cooperation between the United States and The Bahamas, including outreach. Now that staff is in place, the chief is planning the section's work and identifying topics of interest. Rather than simply changing the names on old work requirements statements, the section chief has decided to mix and match the abilities and interests of the staff to key issues, with an eye to maximizing the quality and quantity of reporting. He plans to add elements of economic reporting to the political officer's duties and assign some political tasks to the economic officer. In addition, the two economic/commercial LE staff members will contribute to political cables.

There is no LE staff member dedicated to political reporting. The FY 2012 MSRP requests an additional position for an LE staff person, especially in light of local elections

scheduled for 2012. The OIG team believes that effective restructuring would make this additional staff member unnecessary.

In the past, the commercial assistant helped public affairs staff with the daily media report. The responsibility for this report is temporarily with the PAS, and the OIG team concurs that it should remain there permanently. This arrangement will allow the commercial assistant to do political and economic spot reporting, a duty that she previously performed well.

The political/economic/commercial section office manager position became vacant in April 2011. The Department plans to assign a new U.S. direct-hire office manager soon. The 2008 OIG inspection report informally recommended that the embassy hire an eligible family member for the job. Considering that three cleared office managers (for the Ambassador, DCM, and political/economic/commercial chief) all sit in the same work area, an eligible family member could adequately fill the position, (b) (5) by providing another employment opportunity for a spouse. In addition, converting the position would allow the Department more than \$500,000 to put to better use compared to the cost of a U.S direct-hire position.

**Recommendation 2:** The Bureau of Human Resources, in coordination with Embassy Nassau and the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, should convert the political/economic/commercial section office manager position to an eligible family member position. (Action: DGHR, in coordination with Embassy Nassau and WHA)

Because direct-hire position costs are largely paid by the Department's central funds and LE staff is paid using embassy funds, the embassy would have little financial incentive to convert the position to an LE one—even if it resulted in a net savings to the U.S. Government. Indeed, during the inspection, the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs continued with the assignment of a direct-hire office manager to the political/economic/commercial section position with the knowledge that the OIG team was recommending the elimination of the position. To restore the financial incentive for the embassy and bureau to convert the position, there must be a mechanism to make the embassy whole.

**Recommendation 3:** Embassy Nassau, in coordination with the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs and the Bureau of Resource Management, should fund a locally employed office manager position, in lieu of not filling the direct-hire position in the political/economic/commercial section, by reallocating bureau support funds for the eliminated position and including additional central funds, as necessary. (Action: Embassy Nassau, in coordination with WHA and RM)

### *Leahy Vetting*

The political section handles Leahy vetting of candidates for foreign assistance and training to ensure that the individuals or security force units selected have no record of human rights violations. The embassy has been using an outdated email reporting system that is not compliant with Department instructions. In addition, the workflow is complicated and time consuming because some contributing offices use different systems. The new political officer is taking the online international vetting and security tracking software course and will work with other embassy stakeholders (regional security office, Drug Enforcement Administration, Office

of Defense Cooperation, and narcotics affairs section) to convert to the new Web-based system. The embassy expects to be Leahy compliant by the end of October 2011.

### *Commercial Unit*

Two LE staff members make up the commercial unit, which began to keep records of success in advocacy toward the end of 2010. Even when the commercial unit facilitates contacts with U.S. companies, one staff member reports that in the small Bahamian business community, companies are reluctant to report successes or purchases for fear that competitors will learn of their activities. For example, in March 2011, the commercial section led a delegation of 15 companies to a consumer goods show. Despite follow-up by the commercial section, no company provided information on contacts or purchases from the show. The commercial section currently has two ongoing cases of advocacy between Bahamian and U.S. companies. Approximately 10–15 American business representatives annually request appointments with the economic or commercial section.

The Ambassador has been active in promoting business education and development. She invited a music industry executive and former basketball player Magic Johnson to the Bahamas to speak to the Bahamian Chamber of Commerce. She also promotes women in business fora for professionals and students.

Coordination among all elements of the combined section is good. In addition to weekly country team meetings, Department section heads meet weekly with the Ambassador and with one another.

### *HIV/AIDS*

The political/economic/commercial section administers the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief. Funding is \$5 million over 5 years and includes seven ongoing projects. Several U.S. Government entities are involved, including the U.S. Agency for International Development in Jamaica; the Health Resources System Administration; the Department of Defense, in cooperation with the Bahamas Defense Force; and the Ambassador's HIV Prevention Fund. The Centers for Disease Control maintains an office in the chancery that is staffed by a locally hired doctor who administered \$710,000 in FY 2012 for HIV/AIDS programs to assist the Ministry of Health in HIV monitoring, evaluation, prevention, laboratory strengthening, and health system strengthening. The doctor is supervised by the Centers for Disease Control regional office in Barbados but participates in political/economic/commercial section staff meetings at Embassy Nassau.

### *Contact Database*

Embassy Nassau does not have a central database for all sections' contacts. For large events, the protocol assistant patches together guest lists from different sections and passes around the guest list from the previous year's event to embassy officers and LE staff for additions and subtractions. She then incorporates the changes into a cumbersome Excel document to create a master guest list. The process would be less time consuming and more reliable if the embassy had a centralized database, which would also allow employees to create their own guest lists for smaller events and targeted mailing lists.

**Informal Recommendation 5:** Embassy Nassau should create and use a central contact database.

## **Public Diplomacy**

The PAS works closely with the Ambassador and political/economic/commercial section on mission priorities. Using the ambitious MSRP public diplomacy goal paper and implementation plan, the Ambassador engages target audiences, such as at-risk youth and underserved communities, throughout The Bahamas. The PAS promotes MSRP goals through its use of digital media, strengthens the civil sector through training and exchanges, and raises awareness about the issues affecting socially excluded groups. The Ambassador attends the embassy's law enforcement working group meetings. The public affairs officer (PAO) measures her progress toward these goals through mission activity tracking system reporting. Embassy Nassau does not have an Information Resource Center or any "American spaces."

The PAO is retraining the two LE staff members to use digital media outreach tools such as Facebook and YouTube. The media assistant recently added to the embassy's Internet site links to relevant U.S. Government Web sites, including those of the U.S. Coast Guard and the U.S. Agency for International Development, and is introducing contests on the embassy's Facebook page to attract new "fans." The PAO is reestablishing relations with traditional cultural contacts and reaching out to youth through sports diplomacy and educational activities.

Embassy Nassau sends four to five Bahamian professionals to the United States to participate in regional or multiregional International Visitor Leadership projects each year. Because of the small number of potential participants, the embassy does not have a formal mechanism for nominating participants. The PAO works closely with the rest of the mission to identify possible participants. The embassy hopes that the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs will designate a Fulbright scholar position for The Bahamas. The OIG team supports this goal.

## **Alumni Outreach**

The section does not maintain an exchange program alumni database. Instead, the PAO organizes outreach to exchange alumni on an ad hoc basis. Without a database to manage the growing number of alumni, the section could inadvertently exclude some alumni from events. Each individual who has participated in an exchange program is a potential resource for achieving Embassy Nassau's MSRP goals and objectives. Deepening the mission's connection with alumni would help sustain partnerships and promote public affairs goals.

**Recommendation 4:** Embassy Nassau should use the Alumni Archive as its exchange program alumni database and work with the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Office of Alumni Affairs, to promote alumni outreach activities in The Bahamas. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

## **Grants Administration**

Until September 2011, the PAO was the only warranted grants officer in the embassy and approved all embassy grants, a practice not recommended by the Federal Assistance Policy Handbook (Section 1.2.2). These grants included significant hurricane disaster assistance and

HIV/AIDS awareness grants, which increased the PAO's responsibility from \$70,000 in public diplomacy programs to \$175,000 in a wide variety of grants.

Although the political/economic/commercial section chief recently received a grants warrant and has begun to approve nonpublic diplomacy grants, the day-to-day administrative work associated with the processing and monitoring of grants continues to fall to the cultural and education specialist. This responsibility constitutes a significant part of her workload. The PAS has deobligated all unused grants funds as required, but the grants files for 6 of the 19 completed grants issued by the PAS from March 2010 to September 2011 do not contain final reports, a shortfall that both the PAO and cultural and education specialist attributed to the increased workload. Until the political/economic/commercial section office management specialist and the narcotics affairs section LE staff take on grants approval and administration-related responsibilities, the cultural and educational specialist will continue to perform grants-related tasks not relevant to the goal of increased cultural outreach for which she is responsible.

***Informal Recommendation 6:*** Embassy Nassau should assign responsibility for grants administration to the political/economic/commercial section office management specialist and the narcotics affairs section locally employed staff according to their areas of responsibility and provide them with the necessary training.

#### ***Cultural and Media Specialists' Additional Administrative Duties***

Both the cultural and educational specialist and the media specialist perform administrative duties that detract from their ability to carry out more important public diplomacy activities. The cultural and education specialist spends approximately 25 percent of her time on grants administration. The media specialist spends approximately 10 percent of her time working on the PAS budget, a task she shares with the PAO. The media specialist's digital media-related skills could be more fully developed and used if she did not also have significant budget-related responsibilities. Finally, the PAO spends roughly 45 percent of her time on grants administration, budgeting, travel planning, and other administrative tasks. Additional staff is needed.

***Informal Recommendation 7:*** Embassy Nassau should develop quantitative evidence documenting the need for a public affairs section administrative/program assistant and request the position in its next strategic planning request.

#### **Consular Operations**

The consular section is providing good services to approximately 5 million U.S. citizen visitors and 35,000 U.S. citizens resident in a large consular district that, in addition to The Bahamas, includes the Turks and Caicos Islands some 400 miles southeast of Nassau.

Citizens of The Bahamas do not require visas to visit the United States for tourism or business, provided they depart The Bahamas through the Department of Homeland Security's Customs and Border Protection (CBP) preclearance facilities in Nassau or Freeport and are in possession of a valid passport and police clearance. British subjects resident in the Turks and Caicos Islands also do not require U.S. visas, provided they arrive in the United States directly and are in possession of a valid passport and police clearance.

The consular section has adequate work and waiting room space with good line-of-sight supervision. The consular waiting area is occasionally used for programs, as there is no multipurpose room at the embassy. The consular chief had been at post only a few weeks at the time of the inspection and had already established himself as a positive force both for improving morale and for reviewing procedures. LE staff members are well trained and function effectively as a team. Visa appointment wait times average only 10 days, and service quality is good.

The section needs better signage. American citizen and foreign national consular clientele wait under a narrow canopy outside the embassy before going through the security entrance. Once past security, they cross a driveway and must turn to a side consular entrance. The OIG team observed consular clientele entering the chancery front door, where the local guard force redirected them to the consular entrance. The Consular Web management guidance on signage states that "adequate signage is important..., as it helps applicants understand the process better and improves the flow of applicants." Better signage would improve security and flow of individuals coming to the consular section for services.

***Informal Recommendation 8:*** Embassy Nassau should improve consular signage to provide consular clientele with clear directions.

### ***American Citizens Services***

The consular section provides good routine and emergency services to Americans visiting or living in the consular district. Great distances between islands complicate travel and communications, making good contacts and effective outreach essential. Hurricanes and tropical storms regularly threaten the area, creating the need for a well-developed emergency preparedness program. A robust and effective warden system covers the major islands in The Bahamas and the Turks and Caicos Islands. The American citizens services unit has a broad network of contacts, which includes major cruise lines, hotels, and Bahamian authorities.

### ***Outreach and Public Information***

The consular section is responsible for updating consular information on the embassy's Web site. Several employees told the OIG team that they had responsibility for managing the consular portion of the Web site and expressed a need for further training.

***Informal Recommendation 9:*** Embassy Nassau should designate and train one employee to maintain the consular content on the embassy Internet site and to perform the updates in coordination with the public affairs section and the Bureau of Consular Affairs webmaster.

### ***Special Consular Services***

Most American tourists come to the consular district on cruises and do need to have passports. The most common problems facing Americans are related to illness, arrests, and lack of valid passports. Seriously ill or injured travelers admitted to local hospitals are often left behind by cruise ships. If they leave the cruise, and were traveling without a valid passport, they must obtain passports from the consular section or get a passport waiver from the CBP's preclearance facilities in Nassau or Freeport. The consular section processed 234 limited validity emergency passports in the past 12 months—with same-day service.

In FY 2011, Bahamian police arrested almost 100 Americans for minor drug crimes. They are usually able to return home after an overnight detention and payment of a fine. At the time of the inspection, eight Americans were incarcerated for more serious crimes in The Bahamas and two were serving sentences in the Turks and Caicos Islands. Judicial processing is slow, but there is no evidence of prejudicial treatment of incarcerated Americans. Legal or medical problems can leave Americans in financial difficulties, and the consular section frequently deals with destitute people.

### *Visas*

Bahamians generally do not require visas to visit the United States. According to consular workload statistics, they accounted for only 40 percent of the nearly 24,000 nonimmigrant visa cases in FY 2011. Haitians, Cubans, and Jamaicans account for another 20 percent, with the remaining applicants coming from more 100 other countries. Immigrant visa workload has held steady at between 220 and 250 applicants annually.

Visa appointment wait times are generally less than 1 week, but during high-volume periods and staffing gaps, they can be as long as 4 weeks. Appointments are set for half-hour intervals beginning at 7:00 a.m. and ending at 9:30 a.m.; interviews continue throughout the morning. The embassy Web site provides an option for emergency appointments for visas but does not specifically indicate how applicants from the other islands in the consular district can request appointments that would coordinate with flights from the outer islands. The OIG team learned that some applicants from outer islands feel they need to travel the day before to appear in time for a 7:00 a.m. visa interview.

***Informal Recommendation 10:*** Embassy Nassau should update the visa appointment system so that appropriate accommodations are in place for applicants coming from other islands in the consular district.

***Informal Recommendation 11:*** Embassy Nassau should update the information on the embassy's Internet site so that instructions for making visa appointments address applicants traveling from other islands in the consular district.

### *Waivers of Ineligibilities*

An unusual number of visa applicants have criminal records, previous overstays in the United States, or other ineligibilities for visa-free entry. In accordance with 9 FAM 40.301, consular officers have the authority to recommend Immigration and Nationality Act Section 212(d)(3)(A) waivers of ineligibilities to the Department of Homeland Security's U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, which has a regional office in Kingston, Jamaica. In FY 2011, the consular section submitted almost 450 requests for waivers, ranking Nassau among the top 10 waiver processors of all U.S. visa-issuing posts.

Visa officers indicated that they were uncomfortable with recommending waivers for individuals with serious ineligibilities, many of whom have a history of previous waivers that has raised expectations of entitlement to routine waiver receipt. The new consular chief indicated his willingness to review the policy with the adjudicating officers to develop guidelines for considering each case in light of the reason for the visa ineligibility and the purpose of travel.

Requests for waivers of ineligibility are labor intensive and delay processing of visas for all applicants. Inconsistent policy regarding waiver recommendations can also be confusing for applicants. According to 9 FAM 40.301 N3 a., adjudicating officers can exercise this authority when the applicant is entitled to seek a waiver and is otherwise qualified for a visa, but only when the granting of a waiver is not contrary to U.S. interests. Adjudicating requires consistent guidance to determine when recommendations for waivers are appropriate and to make the visa process more streamlined and transparent.

**Recommendation 5:** Embassy Nassau should review Department of State criteria for recommending waivers of visa ineligibilities and apply those standards to the visa process to facilitate the application of consistent policy for each waiver recommendation. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

### *Visas Viper*

The Visas Vipers committee meets once a month; all reports in the 12 months prior to the OIG visit were made on time and followed 9 FAM 40.37 guidance. The embassy made no submissions during the period evaluated.

### *Embassy Visa Referral Program*

The OIG team reviewed all nonimmigrant visa embassy referrals submitted in FY 2011. The embassy issued worldwide visa referral guidelines as a management notice in January 2011, with edits highlighting local procedures. Not all referring officers had signed certifications on file showing that the consul had briefed them on the visa referral program. Many referring officers submitted referrals without passports, completed application forms, and accompanying documents. The nonimmigrant visa LE staff did not scan documentation into the nonimmigrant visa system for all cases. Department regulation 9 FAM Appendix K, 101 a. states that “a well run and judicious visa referral system is an important tool for advancing U.S. interests abroad.” The new consular chief has taken initial steps to tighten procedures by reissuing the worldwide referral guidelines without edits and ensuring that referring officers sign certifications after he briefs them personally. He has already instructed LE staff to scan all documentation into the nonimmigrant visa system. A well-run embassy referral system facilitates the issuance of visas to key contacts whose travel is clearly in the U.S. interest and prevents attempts at inappropriate influence, or the appearance of such, on individual visa adjudications.

**Recommendation 6:** Embassy Nassau should update its visa referral program and institute procedures to comply with Department of State regulations. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

### *Consular Agency Turks and Caicos*

A consular agency in the Turks and Caicos Islands would enhance Embassy Nassau’s ability to provide services to the islands, some 400 miles from Nassau. Unfortunately, the embassy has poorly managed the process to establish one.

After the last OIG inspection, the embassy requested a consular agent for the Turks and Caicos Islands in Providenciales. The Under Secretary for Management approved the post in September 2008. The U.S. Government leased office space on August 31, 2009, and as of

September 2011 paid \$20,800 per year in rent. The embassy requested permission to establish the consular agency from the United Kingdom only in September 2011. The request was approved 3 weeks later, during the inspection. The embassy hired a half-time consular agent in May 2010, and she attended basic consular training at the Foreign Service Institute in July 2011. However, because the U.S. Government did not have permission to open the consular agency, it had not outfitted the rented office space. The matter finally seems to be proceeding forward after years of mismanagement. The classified annex to this report addresses issues relating to the security enhancements for the office.

## Law Enforcement Cooperation

Key officials in Washington and at the embassy agree that law enforcement cooperation at post is strong. The Ambassador works closely with law enforcement agencies. The embassy holds a weekly coordination meeting that is attended by representatives from law enforcement as well as the political section and the PAS. The MSRP rightly emphasizes the importance of law enforcement efforts.

Coordination is essential, given that the embassy's 105 law enforcement positions dwarf the Department's 32 U.S. direct-hire staff. As found by the previous OIG inspection in 2008, the trilateral, multiagency Operation Bahamas and The Turks and Caicos, led by the Drug Enforcement Administration, has been a very successful joint and combined antidrug activity.

Another major law enforcement element of the mission is the CBP, which runs immigration and customs preclearance facilities in Nassau, New Providence, and Freeport, Grand Bahama Island. With 60 officers, CPB is the largest single contingent in the U.S. mission.

The U.S. Coast Guard also has a detachment in the embassy, with 10 staff members who work closely with the Royal Bahamas Defense Force to conduct joint search-and-rescue and antismuggling operations. A legal attaché and representatives from the Department of Homeland Security's Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Transportation Security Administration round out the law enforcement team.

The Ambassador's efforts to facilitate law enforcement cooperation are notable. For example, when a Bahamian newspaper publisher attacked Department of Homeland Security officers in his publication, the Ambassador initiated a dialogue that defused the situation. The Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement noted the Ambassador's significant commitment and input to the Coast Guard's cooperation with the Royal Bahamian Police Forces and the Royal Bahamian Defense Force.

### *Narcotics Affairs Section*

The Department's narcotics affairs section has one officer and one eligible family member assistant. The section is involved with all parts of the mission, given the heavy emphasis on law enforcement issues. At the time of the inspection, the narcotics affairs officer had been at post for 1 week. Because of the embassy's good track record, the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs identified Embassy Nassau for an increase in funding from \$1.6 million to \$2.9 million as part of the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative to provide law enforcement professionalization and support drug demand reduction. The narcotics affairs officer said he will be able to disburse the additional funds without more staff.

The Caribbean Basin Security Initiative also includes Foreign Military Financing funds to support capacity building within the Royal Bahamas Defense Force, to sustain its own operations, and to conduct joint operations with the U.S. military and law enforcement.

## Resource Management

Agency	U.S. Direct-Hire Staff	U.S. Local-Hire Staff	Foreign National Staff	Total Staff	Total Funding FY 2011
<b>Department of State</b>					
Diplomatic and Consular Programs	7	1	14	22	\$2,596,000
Representation					\$45,000
Narcotics Affairs	1	1		2	\$226,000
International Cooperative Administrative Support Services	11	11	32	54	\$4,290,000
Public Diplomacy	1	0	2	3	\$222,000
Diplomatic Security	2	3	5	10	\$2,238,000
Marine Security Guard	6	0	4	10	\$285,000
Office of Overseas Buildings Operations	0	0	1	1	\$1,065,000
<b>Department of Defense</b>					
Office of Defense Cooperation	4	0	1	5	\$1,207,000
<b>Department of Justice</b>					
Drug Enforcement Administration	32	0	1	33	\$9,106,000
Legal Attaché	1	0	0	1	\$180,000
<b>Department of Homeland Security</b>					
U.S. Coast Guard	10	0	0	10	\$1,700,000
Immigration and Customs Enforcement	1	0	0	1	\$128,000
Customs and Border Protection	60	0	0	60	\$1,956,000
Transportation Security Administration	1	1	0	2	\$359,000
<b>Other Foreign Assistance</b>					
Centers For Disease Control	0	0	1	1	\$104,000
<b>Totals</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>\$25,707,000</b>

## Management Section

The management officer is new to Nassau and is focused on implementing internal controls and improving International Cooperative Administrative Support Services (ICASS). Her major goal is to improve customer service, particularly in housing and motor pool. She is improving communication with and service delivery to the 43 CBP employees based at the international airport in Nassau and is working with the DCM to determine how best to manage administrative support to the 17 CPB and 6 Drug Enforcement Administration employees in Freeport, Grand Bahama Island.

The ratio between ICASS and U.S. direct-hire staff at Embassy Nassau is approximately half the desirable ratio for the region, as determined by the ICASS Service Center. Enhanced services in the areas of housing, facilities management, and motor pool would improve operations, enhance morale, and strengthen internal controls. Each of these areas is addressed in the report.

One of the embassy's biggest management challenges is to stay in close touch with the CBP contingents at the Nassau International Airport and in Freeport. To spend more time visiting CBP offices (and other locations), the management officer recently filled the long-vacant management assistant position.

Because of chronic staffing gaps, embassy provision and oversight of ICASS services to employees in Freeport has been uneven. ICASS service providers should meet established global uniform service standards consistently in all ICASS cost centers. In an attempt to improve services to ICASS clients in Freeport, the embassy recently hired an eligible family member in Freeport who performs community liaison office (CLO) and housing assistant functions. The employee, however, is not trained, and communication with the management section in Nassau is sporadic.

**Recommendation 7:** Embassy Nassau should implement a comprehensive support plan for Freeport that includes at least quarterly visits by the management officer. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

The housing program for CPB Freeport does not follow Department guidelines. Because the operation in Freeport is limited to CBP and Drug Enforcement Administration, and is distant from the embassy in Nassau, it has evolved to a relatively independent operation. Per 15 FAM 211.1 a. and b., all houses in the housing pool must be within appropriate size, space, and cost standards. Failure to adhere to those guidelines results in inequitable service and could jeopardize the safety of Freeport employees.

**Recommendation 8:** Embassy Nassau should implement a comprehensive housing program for Freeport that includes at least quarterly visits by the supervisory general services officer. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

Embassy staff describes management services as uneven and unsatisfactory. More than half of ICASS clients are from CBP, and most CPB employees and their families are living and working in an overseas environment for the first time. Automated work order systems are not accessible to spouses. Obtaining services can be a cumbersome and confusing process that is

frustrating for both the client and the service provider. The Department's collaborative management initiative requires posts worldwide to put in place a quality coordinator to better measure and evaluate administrative support. The embassy does not have a quality coordinator and so is unable to measure its performance or compete for ICASS resources. Without improving the work request system, client frustration will continue to build. A customer service representative would streamline service requests and meet collaborative management initiative requirements.

**Recommendation 9:** Embassy Nassau should designate an International Cooperative Administrative Support Services customer service representative to help process work orders and advocate for and manage client interests. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

**Informal Recommendation 12:** Embassy Nassau should have the customer service representative provide training to clients on automated work request programs.

### ***Real Property***

The embassy owns the chancery, the Ambassador's residence, the DCM's residence, the marine security guard residence, and a residence currently occupied by the political/economic/commercial section chief. The warehouse and health unit are in satisfactory leased spaces. There is no vacant or underutilized property in Nassau. As noted earlier, the U.S. Government has been paying rent on a vacant office in Providenciales, Turks and Caicos Islands, since September 2009, pending establishment of a consular agency.

### **International Cooperative Administrative Support Services**

The Department is the single ICASS provider. There are five Cabinet departments represented on the ICASS council, including the Departments of State, Defense, Justice, Homeland Security, and Health and Human Services. The ICASS customer satisfaction survey showed a decrease in overall scores from 3.89 in 2010 to 3.58 in 2011, well below the regional bureau average. American personnel services (3.07), leasing (3.33), and travel services (3.34) received the lowest scores. The OIG workplace and quality-of-life questionnaires confirmed the ICASS survey assessments.

The ICASS council was disbanded when the previous chair departed post in the summer of 2011. Neither is there a budget committee. Agencies demonstrate little concern about ICASS and give only token approval for workload counts and budget estimates. According to *Foreign Affairs Handbook* regulations 6 FAH-5 H-012.6 and 6 FAH-5 H-012.7, each embassy must establish an ICASS council that includes post-level senior representatives of Cabinet-level and independent agencies, as well as an ICASS budget committee to monitor the embassy's ICASS budget process.

**Recommendation 10:** Embassy Nassau should reconstitute the International Cooperative Administrative Support Services council and budget committee in accordance with Department of State regulations. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

## **Human Resources**

The human resources staff includes three human resources assistants. Two are devoted to LE staff issues, while the third, an eligible family member, handles American personnel. A regional human resources officer in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, provides support; a memorandum of agreement specifies six visits per year.

The human resources section maintains a spreadsheet for tracking the issuance and completion of employee evaluation reports. There were five LE staff employee evaluation reports overdue from September that supervisors were in the process of completing. The embassy employs 17 eligible family members.

### ***Locally Employed Staff Position Descriptions***

The OIG team reviewed a sample of personnel folders and found that a number did not include current position descriptions. Supervisors have not updated or confirmed position descriptions during the annual performance evaluation process. Per 3 FAH-2 H-443, position descriptions must remain current to ensure the accuracy of job requirements. If position descriptions do not accurately reflect the actual duties performed by the employee, there can be gaps in performing essential duties and adequately documenting performance.

**Recommendation 11:** Embassy Nassau should update all outdated locally employed staff position descriptions to reflect actual responsibilities and duties performed. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

### ***Supplemental Pension Plan***

The employee supplemental pension plan is managed by a life insurance company, Colina Financial Advisors Limited. There is, however, no formal agreement between the embassy and the company. A proposed contract for the plan is under review by the Department's Bureau of Human Resources, Office of Overseas Employment, and the Department's Legal Adviser for Employment. In the meantime, the embassy continues to make payments and employees continue to make contributions to the plan. The embassy has been waiting for approval for more than 3 years. The provision for a supplemental pension plan is included in the local compensation plan based on prevailing practice, and employees have been receiving this benefit since 1981. The U.S. Government contribution is 4 percent, and the employee contribution is 5 percent.

**Recommendation 12:** The Bureau of Human Resources, in coordination with the Office of the Legal Adviser, should complete its review of the locally employed staff supplemental pension plan and advise Embassy Nassau of its decision. (Action: DGHR, in coordination with L)

### ***Hotel and Restaurant Survey***

Embassy Nassau is delinquent in submitting the hotel and restaurant survey, which the Department uses to update lodging and meals and incidental expenses for per diem rates. The embassy submitted the last report in January 2006. According to the Department's Standardized Regulations post classification and payment table (Section 920), Embassy Nassau should

complete the hotel and restaurant survey in December of odd years or whenever there are substantial changes in hotel costs (Section 074.32). The current per diem rates may not accurately reflect the prevailing cost of lodging and meals in each location.

**Recommendation 13:** Embassy Nassau should complete the required hotel and restaurant survey and submit it to the Office of Allowances. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

In 2010 the official residence expense staff received sizeable salary increases. The OIG team determined that the embassy did not ask the human resources office to conduct a survey of salaries paid to staff at other diplomatic missions before implementing these substantial increases.

**Informal Recommendation 13:** Embassy Nassau should conduct a survey of official residence expense staff at other diplomatic missions and comparators to ascertain the prevailing wages for household staff.

The embassy does not have an updated awards policy.

**Informal Recommendation 14:** Embassy Nassau should reissue a mission awards policy.

### ***After Hours Duty Program***

The duty officer program provides assistance to Americans who encounter problems and prepares for and responds to natural disasters or other emergencies outside normal working hours. During the OIG inspection, several officers noted concerns about duty rotations in an embassy with a heavy duty workload. The OIG team reviewed the duty book and duty roster. The 147-page duty book has more than 50 pages of contact numbers. There is no information on natural disasters, death, or illness in the official community, or on how to respond to a crime involving a member of the official community. In accordance with 2 FAM 113.8-1 to 113.8-4(D), the management section is responsible for maintaining the duty office guide, which in Nassau rotates only among Department officers. The consular section briefs incoming duty officers each week. A well-functioning duty program distributes responsibilities equally among all mission elements, allowing after hours duties to be met without overburdening any one section or agency.

**Recommendation 14:** Embassy Nassau should bring the duty officer program into compliance with Department of State guidance and update the duty officer guide with readily accessible information relevant to all mission elements. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

### **General Services Office**

#### ***Supply Chain Management***

Functional integration among the procurement, financial management, and property sections is generally satisfactory. When procuring expendable supplies, the embassy strikes a good balance between ordering from the General Services Administration and local suppliers. For nonexpendable supplies, the embassy is able to maintain a relatively low level of storage and personnel because landlords provide household furnishings.

### ***Property Management***

Warehouse staffing levels are relatively low because nonexpendable property is limited to appliances. Landlords supply residential furniture. Embassy residents do not return signed residential appliance inventories. As a result, the limited embassy inventory is treated as an afterthought. Per 14 FAM 416.3 g., employees are required to sign residential inventories. Without an agreed inventory, it is impossible to maintain positive control of government-owned appliances.

***Informal Recommendation 15:*** Embassy Nassau should require employees to sign and return residential inventories within 30 days of their occupancy of assigned residences.

Property staff is not adequately trained. None has been fully trained in the automated Integrated Logistics Management System or in Microsoft Outlook. With so few property staff members, employees have been unable to take the time for needed training. The Department has mandated the automated logistics system worldwide. Without basic Microsoft Word, email, and logistics computer literacy, property staff cannot meet basic job requirements.

***Informal Recommendation 16:*** Embassy Nassau should provide property management staff members with the computer training necessary to perform their duties.

The warehouse receiving area is not adequately defined. Because the warehouse is relatively small, it is less formal than larger operations. Per 14 FAH-1 H-318.1-2 a. and b., clearly designated receiving and holding areas are necessary to prevent newly arrived, but not yet officially inventoried, goods from being mixed with other property and to decrease the risk of theft.

***Informal Recommendation 17:*** Embassy Nassau should designate a receiving area and use it for storage of all items not yet properly received and distributed to offices or entered into the warehouse inventory.

### ***Customs and Shipping***

The embassy does a good job maintaining local contacts at the port to ensure quality service. But the Bahamian system of shipment customs clearances is cumbersome and time consuming, and the embassy devotes too much time to obtaining routine clearances. To clear a shipment, the embassy employee must spend much of the day at the port getting approvals on documentation from a succession of offices.

***Informal Recommendation 18:*** Embassy Nassau should determine whether outsourcing routine customs and shipment clearances is feasible and, if so, establish a policy to use this option whenever possible.

### ***Housing***

The embassy has done an admirable job obtaining appropriate housing in a competitive lease market. Adequate maintenance is an ongoing challenge, however.

Houses are sometimes dirty and in need of repair when employees move in. Embassy housing staff is not able to keep up with the summer turnover; inspections and contractor oversight are inadequate. Per the uniform ICASS standard for make readies, ICASS clients should move into residences that are clean and in good repair. (b) (5)

***Informal Recommendation 19:*** Embassy Nassau should implement a comprehensive annual residential make-ready plan that includes adequate landlord liaison and contractor oversight throughout the year.

Residential maintenance is uneven, and response time to maintenance emergencies is sometimes delayed. The embassy relies on landlords for maintenance of its short-term leased housing. Per Article Seven E of the model standard lease,<sup>2</sup> landlords are responsible for emergency maintenance on short-term leased properties, but there is an option for the embassy to make emergency repairs and deduct the cost from the rent. (b) (5)

***Informal Recommendation 20:*** Embassy Nassau should implement a comprehensive plan for the timely resolution of maintenance emergencies, using embassy resources when necessary.

Data in the Real Property Application are sometimes inaccurate. Nassau recently implemented the software, and staff is not consistently following Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations guidelines for measuring houses. As a result, some of the data are incorrect. Per 15 FAM 171.3 a., data entered into the application supports post management of the housing program. Without good data, the embassy is unable to adhere to housing standards and make equitable housing assignments.

***Informal Recommendation 21:*** Embassy Nassau should remeasure properties in accordance with Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations measurement guidelines and adjust Real Property Application data as necessary.

The mission has no written guidelines on an acceptable length of time for a house to stand vacant between occupants and on who pays the lease during the vacancy. Updating the embassy housing handbook to include 15 FAM 164 b. guidelines on vacancies would eliminate the need for the housing board to negotiate lease costs with the recipient agency for every housing turnover.

***Informal Recommendation 22:*** Embassy Nassau should update its housing handbook to include Department of State guidelines on vacancies.

### ***Facilities Management***

The facilities management staff maintains the government-owned chancery, Ambassador's residence, DCM's residence, marine security guard residence, and one other residence currently occupied by the political/economic/commercial officer. There are nine total

---

<sup>2</sup> 15 FAM Exhibit 341(B).

facilities management staff members: three LE janitors at the chancery, one laborer who acts as a painter, a craftsman with carpentry and masonry skills, a foreman, a plumber, an A/C technician, and the LE facilities management supervisor who is also an electrician.

There is no consistent U.S. direct-hire facilities management support to Embassy Nassau. The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations is considering how to increase such support, and the OIG team applauds that effort. Increasing direct interaction with experienced regional facilities managers will assist Embassy Nassau improve its weak preventive maintenance system for government-owned properties and its inadequate customer service for employees occupying short-term leased properties.

### ***Safety, Health, and Environmental Management***

The embassy recently designated the supervisory general services officer as post's safety and health officer, but the officer lacks the needed training and background. In addition, the embassy lacks a comprehensive safety and health program. Because of competing priorities, the safety program has languished. Per 15 FAM 932 and 15 FAM 933-935, a safety program, complete with a standing committee and prescribed, at least semiannual, meetings, is required at every Foreign Service post. Without a consistent eye to safety, employees are at risk of injury.

**Recommendation 15:** Embassy Nassau should institute a formal safety and health standing committee. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

### ***Motor Pool***

The embassy employs an eligible family member fleet manager to oversee 23 self-drive vehicles in various states of repair, plus drivers for the Ambassador and the DCM.

There is no driver support for employees of Embassy Nassau; employees are expected to drive themselves in U.S. Government vehicles. The embassy has determined in past years that hiring drivers was a low priority given the limited resources. Per 14 FAM 432.4 b., the use of professional drivers or chauffeurs is preferred for local travel. Given the climate, severe traffic and parking problems, and unreliable public transportation, the lack of driver support has a negative impact on the operational effectiveness of employees. Difficulty moving around the island results in some employees being more isolated (b) (5)

**Informal Recommendation 23:** Embassy Nassau should implement a system of transportation support to employees.

### **Financial Management Operations**

There are seven positions in financial management, headed up by a first-tour financial management officer who arrived at post in May 2010. A financial specialist, a financial assistant, three voucher examiners, and a cashier complete the staff. One of the voucher examiners is also the principal timekeeper.

The OIG team reviewed unliquidated obligations for prior years and verified that all contracts, grants, and purchase orders were current. There was one outstanding travel advance

from June 2011 that was settled but pending fiscal data to be cleared. Premium travel was not an issue because it was not authorized. The inspectors observed an unannounced cash verification that showed the cashier's accountability in balance and operations in order.

### *Vouchering*

In the OIG team's review of payment files, approximately 10 percent of the vouchers did not show evidence of receipt of the goods or services. A lack of coordination with the general services office leads to inadequate documentation for receipt of goods or services. Department regulations 4 FAH-3 H-423.5-1 c. require a proper receiving document<sup>3</sup> from an individual authorized to receive and accept the goods or services prior to making payment. To permit accountability on procurements and payments, there must be evidence of a receipt.

**Recommendation 16:** Embassy Nassau should include documentation reflecting receipt of goods and services on all vouchers for payment. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

### *Representation*

There was no management instruction outlining mission objectives for use of representation funds and procedures for submitting claims based on current per capita limits. Per 3 FAM 3246.1, the chief of mission (COM) is required to issue guidelines for effective use of representation funds in accordance with mission objectives. In the interest of controlling costs, the mission should establish dollar limits for the various types of approved representation functions.

**Informal Recommendation 24:** Embassy Nassau should issue a management instruction outlining its policy on use of representation funds and update the per capita amounts to reflect current costs for restaurant and at-home meals and receptions.

The embassy received \$17,800 of in-kind contributions from local sources for the last July 4th representation event. Per 2 FAM 964, post shall report semiannually on all gifts received both in cash and in kind to the Resources Management Bureau Gift Funds Coordinator. The report must provide the amount paid by the non-Federal source or a reasonable approximation of the market value of the benefit.

**Recommendation 17:** Embassy Nassau should report all gifts, especially the in-kind contributions received for the July 4, 2011, representation event. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

### *Accommodation Exchange*

(b) (5) Part of the problem is in the consular section and is addressed separately. Another is in accommodation exchange. According to 4 FAH-3 H-361.2, the COM should determine whether accommodation exchange services will be provided at post. When satisfactory local commercial banks, automated teller machines, or currency exchange businesses are available for the purchase of U.S. dollars with foreign currency, personnel can use those facilities if they are adequate, secure, and convenient. There are

<sup>3</sup> Defined in 4 FAH-3 H-423.5-2 b.

automatic tellers at the nearby Scotia Bank and the British Colonial Hilton [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**Recommendation 18:** Embassy Nassau should conduct a management review to determine whether outsourcing accommodation exchange would be beneficial and cost effective and, if so, institute a policy to use this option whenever possible. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

### **Information Management and Information Security**

Embassy Nassau's information management program generally meets the information processing and communication needs of the mission. The program is led by a mid-level officer who has fulfilled the duties of his position while simultaneously serving as the management officer during times of need. The OIG team reviewed systems management, telephone operations, radio programs, and mail operations. Information security issues are covered in the classified annex to this report.

Staffing gaps have diminished the overall effectiveness of the program, which is fully staffed for the first time in over a year with the recent arrival of the information systems officer.

(b) (5)  
[REDACTED]

**Informal Recommendation 25:** Embassy Nassau should implement a leadership plan for the information management office that includes revising and clarifying duties and locally employed staff supervisory roles in the information systems center.

### **Information Systems Center**

Customer support is the information systems center's primary function. However, the center does not provide consistent support during business hours, which can adversely affect customer productivity. The provision of continuous and reliable systems support during business hours is critical to the maintenance and operation of the Department's network.

**Informal Recommendation 26:** Embassy Nassau should implement a plan to provide consistent systems support to customers during embassy business hours.

### **Dedicated Internet Networks**

Embassy Nassau has not registered its dedicated Internet networks with the Bureau of Information Resource Management as required by 5 FAM 872.2. Post must justify a dedicated Internet network by demonstrating a clear need that cannot be met by the unclassified network. If not appropriately managed and justified, dedicated Internet networks divert resources from the Department's OpenNet network. (b) (5)  
[REDACTED]

**Informal Recommendation 27:** Embassy Nassau should register all dedicated Internet networks with the Bureau of Information Resource Management.

***Unclassified Server Room Cabling***

The unclassified server rooms contain network cables that are not organized and labeled appropriately. Competing priorities have left the information management staff with minimal time for cabling work. According to guidelines in 5 FAH-9 H-380, information management staff must label infrastructure and equipment components uniquely and legibly. Inadequately documented network cabling could potentially hamper staff efforts to fix network connectivity problems and increases the risk of unauthorized devices being introduced into the network.

**Recommendation 19:** Embassy Nassau should organize and appropriately label the unclassified server room network cabling. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

***Electrical and Cabling Racks***

All of the electrical racks in the chancery need maintenance. The racks have surplus wires and unlabeled cabling, which could result in wasted time during maintenance. (b) (5)

**Recommendation 20:** Embassy Nassau should organize and appropriately label all electrical racks. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

(b) (5)

**Recommendation 21:** (b) (5)

***Radio Network***

Embassy Nassau does not have host nation approval to operate its emergency radio network frequencies per 5 FAM 541c. The requirement is in place to ensure interference-free radio communication, which is especially vital in the event of a natural disaster or other emergency. Embassy files contain correspondence between the mission and the host nation, but nothing that indicates consent for the use of the frequencies.

**Recommendation 22:** Embassy Nassau should request approval from the Government of The Bahamas for use of all embassy radio frequencies. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

Poor radio reception is an area of concern, but the embassy has been unable to determine the cause of the problem. Some families on the island have difficulty communicating during radio testing. Poor reception diminishes the effectiveness of the radio program, which is a critical part of the mission's emergency preparedness program.

**Recommendation 23:** Embassy Nassau, in coordination with the Bureau of Information Resource Management and the Regional Information Management Center Florida, should improve the embassy's radio network reception. (Action: Embassy Nassau, in coordination with IRM and RIMC Florida)

Furthermore, the mission does not have a current radio inventory. This issue was identified in November 2010 but, due to competing priorities, remains unaddressed. A complete and up-to-date radio inventory is essential to the mission's emergency preparedness program.

**Recommendation 24:** Embassy Nassau should conduct an inventory of all radios and implement procedures to keep the inventory current. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

## Quality of Life

### Community Liaison Office

The CLO, which appears to manage an active program, consists of one coordinator. She received CLO training in Rwanda 3 years ago but has not received training in Washington. The coordinator regularly attends the country team meeting and meets each week with the DCM. The coordinator has attempted to bring groups of officers and their families living in Nassau and Freeport together for various community events, but given the groups' geographic separation (on two islands 120 miles apart), these events have not been successful. Other challenges facing the coordinator include difficult traffic conditions, the distance between schools and officers' homes, and an increase in dengue fever. The CLO coordinator works closely with the three schools to develop a more reliable and convenient participant-funded bus system for eligible family member students attending the schools at opposite ends of the island. She is also working to improve the embassy community's knowledge of and preventive measures for dengue fever. The coordinator recognizes that the lack of a regular mission publication is hampering efforts to create a cohesive community. The embassy is hiring a part-time employee to publish a weekly electronic newsletter.

### International Schools

The three international schools the mission uses meet the needs of the embassy community. (b)(5)(b)(6)



### Health Unit

According to quality-of-life questionnaires and individual interviews, clients lack confidence in the services of both the health unit and local medical providers. The health unit is located in leased space of a local health clinic near a gated community in which the embassy leases approximately 30 houses. The LE staff nurse position was recently vacated, but the embassy expects to fill it soon. Nurse hours have varied over the years, but clients believe that the position should be full time to serve the mission adequately.

Because ambulance service is also perceived as unreliable, clients are not confident that they can get adequate medical care of any kind locally. According to the director of medical services in Washington, the embassy nurse has been under pressure from clients to approve medical evacuations to the United States even when local care is adequate. According to 16 FAM 311, medical evacuations should be limited to cases that cannot be adequately treated by local health care providers.

***Informal Recommendation 28:*** Embassy Nassau should evaluate the services of the health unit in relation to local medical conditions to determine whether the current part-time schedule for the nurse is meeting the needs of employees.

***Informal Recommendation 29:*** Embassy Nassau should institute a comprehensive medical orientation for employees and families that includes detailed documentation on local health care providers, a concise emergency numbers card, and driving tours of local providers.

***Informal Recommendation 30:*** Embassy Nassau should identify transportation options for medical emergencies.

### **Employee Recreation Association**

Post management advised the OIG team that it had disbanded the American Employee Association and closed the commissary due to lack of a governing board and internal controls. In accordance with 6 FAM 521 a., the principal officer at each post should determine the continuing need for existing facilities. The only inventory in the commissary was beer and a few logo items. The Office of Commissary and Recreation Affairs plans to seek Central Fund Board Chair approval to place the association in trusteeship, with the ultimate goal of liquidating the assets of the organization.

**Recommendation 25:** Embassy Nassau, in coordination with the Bureau of Administration, should proceed with terminating the American Employee Association and liquidating the remaining inventory. (Action: Embassy Nassau, in coordination with A)

## Management Controls

The COM annual management controls assurance statement contained no reportable weaknesses. However, the management controls coordinator did mention instances where cleaning services for residences were being paid for in cash. Also, motor vehicle usage forms were not being completed to account for mileage. The general services officer has since started using blanket purchase agreements for cleaning services and is comparing vehicle fuel consumption to miles driven to ascertain whether fuel is being misused. The OIG team noted deficiencies in management controls within general services and financial management.

### Ambassadorial Absences from Post

The Department has not followed its own guidance or procedures for approving COM absences from post. The Ambassador was absent from post for 276 days during a 670-day period from November 19, 2009, to September 19, 2011—an average of 12 days per month. The 276 days include 84 nonwork days (weekends and holidays) and 102 personal leave days. The Ambassador also traveled to the United States for 77 work days on what she identified as business, with 23 days on what appear to have been official travel orders. All travel was at her personal expense except when she was on official travel orders. The Ambassador requested permission each time from the Department when she visited the United States. In each case, the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs approved her request. The frequent absences of the Ambassador contributed to poor mission management.

U.S. Code 5 U.S.C. 6301(2)(A)(xii) exempts the Ambassador from accounting for annual and sick leave. The implementation of this exemption is addressed in 3 FAM 3320 and 3 FAH-1 H-3320, which note<sup>4</sup> that the COM is "on duty at all times, including periods of vacation and sickness." On October 21, 2008, the Under Secretary for Management issued a memo amending the process for approving COM requests for permission to be away from post by requiring the regional bureau to forward such requests to the Under Secretary's office for approval when the number of work days away from post (on other than temporary duty orders) in a calendar year exceeded 26.

In 2010, The Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs referred the three instances of absence to the Under Secretary. Because the documentation from Nassau did not follow the requirements of 3 FAH-1 H-3323 and 3324 and the requests from the regional bureau to the Under Secretary did not follow the October 21, 2008, memo, the Under Secretary did not have accurate information upon which to make a decision. As a result, the Department authorized the Ambassador to be away from her post for 139 days in 2010.

**Recommendation 26:** Embassy Nassau should make all requests for chief of mission absences from post in compliance with relevant regulations. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

**Recommendation 27:** The Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs should abide by the *Foreign Affairs Manual* and Under Secretary for Management's instructions regarding chief of mission absences from post. (Action: WHA)

---

<sup>4</sup> 3 FAM 3323.2

The October 2008 memo states that “the regulations governing COM absence from post are conflicting and current practice has grown both confusing and subject to potential abuse from that lack of clarity.” The memo further states that it is “an interim amendment to the FAM and FAH, which will be redrafted to reflect this new approval process.” The 3 FAM 3320 and 3 FAH-1 H-3320 sections governing absence of the COM have not been updated since March 24, 2005. The current process is confusing and subject to potential abuse.

**Recommendation 28:** The Bureau of Human Resources should update the *Foreign Affairs Manual* and the *Foreign Affairs Handbook* to reflect the current process for approving chief of mission absences from post. (Action: DGHR)

### *Consular Fee Collections*

The consular subcashier collects fees for the full range of consular services, including machine-readable visa application fees. A review of FY 2010 consular collections showed that the consular subcashier frequently handled (b) (5) in fees per month. (b) (5) and the accountable consular officer oversees consular collections appropriately. The accountable consular officer and financial management officer are compliant with instructions in 7 FAH-1 Exhibit H-770.1 and with 4 FAM 322. (b) (5)

Using off-site collections of machine-readable visa fees or credit cards for collecting other consular fees could eliminate most of the cash now handled. Consular equipment and supplies are accounted for appropriately and stored securely.

**Recommendation 29:** (b) (5)

### *eServices*

The mission has not deployed some automated procedures that would improve internal controls, give managers better processes, and enhance customer service. Per telegram 08 STATE 133010, eServices is the Department-wide standard for submitting requests for administrative services. However, the embassy is using eServices only for motor pool requests. The general services section could improve its efficiency by using eServices for maintenance services, property receiving, and expendable supplies applications as well.

**Recommendation 30:** Embassy Nassau should implement eServices for all administrative services requests. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

### *Vehicle Usage*

Because the embassy does not have a motor pool, it authorizes employee self-drive and uses a local gas station for refueling official vehicles. The embassy reviews invoices for charges and compares them to gas consumption each month. However, the driver who records mileage and gas consumption does not always complete the vehicle daily use record (Official Form-108). According to 14 FAM 436.1 a., all drivers of official vehicles must complete the daily vehicle use record. The employee operating the vehicle must complete the form daily, except for

passenger signatures. The responsible officer or employee must periodically review the Official Form-108 for each vehicle and must check the accuracy of odometer readings. The embassy has no way of assuring that fuel usage tracks with the number of kilometers driven, a shortcoming that could permit misuse of official gas cards.

**Recommendation 31:** Embassy Nassau should implement procedures for drivers of official vehicles to complete the daily vehicle use record and for the responsible employee to verify proper use of official gas cards. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

### *Separation of Duties*

The employee performing physical inventories also manages the paper inventory. Because of lack of training, the property management supervisor sometimes assigns the same employee to do both the physical and paper inventories. In accordance with 14 FAM 411.2 d., a sound management control system must ensure that no one individual controls all aspects of any transaction affecting the receipt, storage, or disposition of expendable or nonexpendable personal property. A lack of checks and balances increases vulnerability to theft and fraud.

**Recommendation 32:** Embassy Nassau should establish the appropriate separation of duties required for physical and paper inventories. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

### *Vouchering*

Payment vouchers do not show a paid stamp or perforation to annul the documentation as required by 4 FAH-3 H-422.6 a., which states that vouchers, voucher schedules, and supporting documentation must be marked clearly to prevent duplicate processing. A stamp or other form of mark should be used to indicate "PAID" on all payment documents.

**Informal Recommendation 31:** Embassy Nassau should obtain a stamp or perforation machine to annul vouchers and supporting documentation immediately after payment.

The embassy made several payments against copies of invoices as opposed to originals. Department regulation 4 FAH 3 H-422.6 a. states that if the original invoice is lost, a copy marked "Duplicate Original" may be used when supported by an administrative approval on the document.

**Informal Recommendation 32:** Embassy Nassau should mark copies of invoices as "Duplicate Original" if the original is lost or not available and include a statement indicating the establishment of administrative control to prevent duplicate payments.

### *Overtime*

In reviewing time and attendance reporting, the OIG team noticed that LE staff overtime was not always approved in advance as required by the Embassy Nassau Locally Employed Staff Employee Handbook (p. 15). More than \$73,000 was spent in overtime in FY 2010.

***Informal Recommendation 33:*** Embassy Nassau should issue a management notice reminding employees and supervisors of the requirement to request and approve overtime in advance.

### ***Cell Phones and BlackBerry Devices***

Nearly every American on staff has a BlackBerry communications device without a business justification. Management acknowledges loose internal controls in the program and plans to correct deficiencies to save costs.

***Informal Recommendation 34:*** Embassy Nassau should revise its mobile communications policy to establish a formal approval process for BlackBerry issuance that contains a higher threshold of U.S. Government interest.

***Informal Recommendation 35:*** Embassy Nassau should review current use and establish a business justification for each issued BlackBerry device.

In addition to having lax issuance controls, the mission is allowing employees to make personal calls on their official cellular phones and BlackBerry devices. The post administrative policy on use of cell phones describes the procedure whereby every month, the information management officer sends a notice to each individual with a cell phone or BlackBerry bill exceeding \$50. Each cell phone or BlackBerry user is supposed to identify personal calls and return the annotated bill to the receptionist. The receptionist then bills the individual for the personal calls and forwards a copy to the embassy cashier. The financial management office does not maintain a centralized accounts receivable ledger to track outstanding indebtedness, including cell phones and BlackBerry personal charges. It is the responsibility of the receptionist to track the bills and payments.

Per 5 FAM 526.1, U.S. Government-owned cellular telephones are for official business. Each post must establish a policy on the personal use of government-issued cellular telephones. At a minimum, this policy must define whether personal use is allowed and the limits for personal use without the requirement for employee reimbursement to the issuing agency. Also, the policy must include provisions to maintain adequate fiscal control, set forth user responsibilities, require a signed receipt when phones are issued, provide a method whereby the user must validate his/her calls each billing cycle, require the user to return the instrument upon transfer, and detail the applicable security restrictions. A lack of controls creates a vulnerability for misuse and abuse of official cellular telephones.

***Informal Recommendation 36:*** Embassy Nassau should establish and enforce a cell phone use policy consistent with Department of State regulations.

## List of Recommendations

**Recommendation 1:** (b) (5)

**Recommendation 2:** The Bureau of Human Resources, in coordination with Embassy Nassau and the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, should convert the political/economic/commercial section office manager position to an eligible family member position. (Action: DGHR, in coordination with Embassy Nassau and WHA)

**Recommendation 3:** Embassy Nassau, in coordination with the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs and the Bureau of Resource Management, should fund a locally employed office manager position, in lieu of not filling the direct-hire position in the political/economic/commercial section, by reallocating bureau support funds for the eliminated position and including additional central funds, as necessary. (Action: Embassy Nassau, in coordination with WHA and RM)

**Recommendation 4:** Embassy Nassau should use the Alumni Archive as its exchange program alumni database and work with the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Office of Alumni Affairs, to promote alumni outreach activities in The Bahamas. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

**Recommendation 5:** Embassy Nassau should review Department of State criteria for recommending waivers of visa ineligibilities and apply those standards to the visa process to facilitate the application of consistent policy for each waiver recommendation. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

**Recommendation 6:** Embassy Nassau should update its visa referral program and institute procedures to comply with Department of State regulations. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

**Recommendation 7:** Embassy Nassau should implement a comprehensive support plan for Freeport that includes at least quarterly visits by the management officer. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

**Recommendation 8:** Embassy Nassau should implement a comprehensive housing program for Freeport that includes at least quarterly visits by the supervisory general services officer. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

**Recommendation 9:** Embassy Nassau should designate an International Cooperative Administrative Support Services customer service representative to help process work orders and advocate for and manage client interests. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

**Recommendation 10:** Embassy Nassau should reconstitute the International Cooperative Administrative Support Services council and budget committee in accordance with Department of State regulations. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

**Recommendation 11:** Embassy Nassau should update all outdated locally employed staff position descriptions to reflect actual responsibilities and duties performed. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

**Recommendation 12:** The Bureau of Human Resources, in coordination with the Office of the Legal Adviser, should complete its review of the locally employed staff supplemental pension plan and advise Embassy Nassau of its decision. (Action: DGHR, in coordination with L)

**Recommendation 13:** Embassy Nassau should complete the required hotel and restaurant survey and submit it to the Office of Allowances. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

**Recommendation 14:** Embassy Nassau should bring the duty officer program into compliance with Department of State guidance and update the duty officer guide with readily accessible information relevant to all mission elements. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

**Recommendation 15:** Embassy Nassau should institute a formal safety and health standing committee. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

**Recommendation 16:** Embassy Nassau should include documentation reflecting receipt of goods and services on all vouchers for payment. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

**Recommendation 17:** Embassy Nassau should report all gifts, especially the in-kind contributions received for the July 4, 2011, representation event. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

**Recommendation 18:** Embassy Nassau should conduct a management review to determine whether outsourcing accommodation exchange would be beneficial and cost effective and, if so, institute a policy to use this option whenever possible. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

**Recommendation 19:** Embassy Nassau should organize and appropriately label the unclassified server room network cabling. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

**Recommendation 20:** Embassy Nassau should organize and appropriately label all electrical racks. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

**Recommendation 21:** (b) (5)

**Recommendation 22:** Embassy Nassau should request approval from the Government of The Bahamas for use of all embassy radio frequencies. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

**Recommendation 23:** Embassy Nassau, in coordination with the Bureau of Information Resource Management and the Regional Information Management Center Florida, should improve the embassy's radio network reception. (Action: Embassy Nassau, in coordination with IRM and RIMC Florida)

**Recommendation 24:** Embassy Nassau should conduct an inventory of all radios and implement procedures to keep the inventory current. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

**Recommendation 25:** Embassy Nassau, in coordination with the Bureau of Administration, should proceed with terminating the American Employee Association and liquidating the remaining inventory. (Action: Embassy Nassau, in coordination with A)

**Recommendation 26:** Embassy Nassau should make all requests for chief of mission absences from post in compliance with relevant regulations. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

**Recommendation 27:** The Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs should abide by the *Foreign Affairs Manual* and Under Secretary for Management's instructions regarding chief of mission absences from post. (Action: WHA)

**Recommendation 28:** The Bureau of Human Resources should update the *Foreign Affairs Manual* and the *Foreign Affairs Handbook* to reflect the current process for approving chief of mission absences from post. (Action: DGHR)

**Recommendation 29:** (b) (5)



**Recommendation 30:** Embassy Nassau should implement eServices for all administrative services requests. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

**Recommendation 31:** Embassy Nassau should implement procedures for drivers of official vehicles to complete the daily vehicle use record and for the responsible employee to verify proper use of official gas cards. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

**Recommendation 32:** Embassy Nassau should establish the appropriate separation of duties required for physical and paper inventories. (Action: Embassy Nassau)

## 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 Nassau should provide training for the current Equal Employment Opportunity counselor at the next available opportunity.

***Informal Recommendation 2:*** Embassy Nassau should nominate a second Equal Employment Opportunity counselor for training and designation.

***Informal Recommendation 3:*** Embassy Nassau should write a political/economic/ commercial reporting plan that is tied to Mission Strategic and Resource Plan goals and includes information from law enforcement entities in the mission.

***Informal Recommendation 4:*** Embassy Nassau should increase the quality of its political/economic/commercial reporting by adding more context and analysis.

***Informal Recommendation 5:*** Embassy Nassau should create and use a central contact database.

***Informal Recommendation 6:*** Embassy Nassau should assign responsibility for grants administration to the political/economic/commercial section office management specialist and the narcotics affairs section locally employed staff according to their areas of responsibility and provide them with the necessary training.

***Informal Recommendation 7:*** Embassy Nassau should develop quantitative evidence documenting the need for a public affairs section administrative/program assistant and request the position in its next strategic planning request.

***Informal Recommendation 8:*** Embassy Nassau should improve consular signage to provide consular clientele with clear directions.

***Informal Recommendation 9:*** Embassy Nassau should designate and train one employee to maintain the consular content on the embassy Internet site and to perform the updates in coordination with the public affairs section and the Bureau of Consular Affairs webmaster.

***Informal Recommendation 10:*** Embassy Nassau should update the visa appointment system so that appropriate accommodations are in place for applicants coming from other islands in the consular district.

***Informal Recommendation 11:*** Embassy Nassau should update the information on the embassy's Internet site so that instructions for making visa appointments address applicants traveling from other islands in the consular district.

***Informal Recommendation 12:*** Embassy Nassau should have the customer service representative provide training to clients on automated work request programs.

***Informal Recommendation 13:*** Embassy Nassau should conduct a survey of official residence expense staff at other diplomatic missions and comparators to ascertain the prevailing wages for household staff.

***Informal Recommendation 14:*** Embassy Nassau should reissue a mission awards policy.

***Informal Recommendation 15:*** Embassy Nassau should require employees to sign and return residential inventories within 30 days of their occupancy of assigned residences.

***Informal Recommendation 16:*** Embassy Nassau should provide property management staff members with the computer training necessary to perform their duties.

***Informal Recommendation 17:*** Embassy Nassau should designate a receiving area and use it for storage of all items not yet properly received and distributed to offices or entered into the warehouse inventory.

***Informal Recommendation 18:*** Embassy Nassau should determine whether outsourcing routine customs and shipment clearances is feasible and, if so, establish a policy to use this option whenever possible.

***Informal Recommendation 19:*** Embassy Nassau should implement a comprehensive annual residential make-ready plan that includes adequate landlord liaison and contractor oversight throughout the year.

***Informal Recommendation 20:*** Embassy Nassau should implement a comprehensive plan for the timely resolution of maintenance emergencies, using embassy resources when necessary.

***Informal Recommendation 21:*** Embassy Nassau should remeasure properties in accordance with Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations measurement guidelines and adjust Real Property Application data as necessary.

***Informal Recommendation 22:*** Embassy Nassau should update its housing handbook to include Department of State guidelines on vacancies.

***Informal Recommendation 23:*** Embassy Nassau should implement a system of transportation support to employees.

***Informal Recommendation 24:*** Embassy Nassau should issue a management instruction outlining its policy on use of representation funds and update the per capita amounts to reflect current costs for restaurant and at-home meals and receptions.

***Informal Recommendation 25:*** Embassy Nassau should implement a leadership plan for the information management office that includes revising and clarifying duties and locally employed staff supervisory roles in the information systems center.

***Informal Recommendation 26:*** Embassy Nassau should implement a plan to provide consistent systems support to customers during embassy business hours.

***Informal Recommendation 27:*** Embassy Nassau should register all dedicated Internet networks with the Bureau of Information Resource Management.

***Informal Recommendation 28:*** Embassy Nassau should evaluate the services of the health unit in relation to local medical conditions to determine whether the current part-time schedule for the nurse is meeting the needs of employees.

***Informal Recommendation 29:*** Embassy Nassau should institute a comprehensive medical orientation for employees and families that includes detailed documentation on local health care providers, a concise emergency numbers card, and driving tours of local providers.

***Informal Recommendation 30:*** Embassy Nassau should identify transportation options for medical emergencies.

***Informal Recommendation 31:*** Embassy Nassau should obtain a stamp or perforation machine to annul vouchers and supporting documentation immediately after payment.

***Informal Recommendation 32:*** Embassy Nassau should mark copies of invoices as “Duplicate Original” if the original is lost or not available and include a statement indicating the establishment of administrative control to prevent duplicate payments.

***Informal Recommendation 33:*** Embassy Nassau should issue a management notice reminding employees and supervisors of the requirement to request and approve overtime in advance.

***Informal Recommendation 34:*** Embassy Nassau should revise its mobile communications policy to establish a formal approval process for BlackBerry issuance that contains a higher threshold of U.S. Government interest.

***Informal Recommendation 35:*** Embassy Nassau should review current use and establish a business justification for each issued BlackBerry device.

***Informal Recommendation 36:*** Embassy Nassau should establish and enforce a cell phone use policy consistent with Department of State regulations.

## Principal Officials

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Arrival Date</b>
Ambassador	Nicole Avant	10/09*
Deputy Chief of Mission	John Dinkelman	08/11
Chiefs of Sections:		
Management	Cheryl Moore	07/11
Consular	John Armstrong	08/11
Political/Economic	Alex Sokoloff	07/11
Public Affairs	Erica Thibault	08/10
Regional Security	Bradley Lynn	12/10
Other Agencies:		
Office of Defense Cooperation	LCDR Janice Smith	12/08
Department of Homeland Security		
Customs and Border Protection	R. Allen Smith	10/10
Immigration and Customs Enforcement	Elizabeth Conner	05/10
Transportation Security Administration	Lawrence Mizell	08/10
U.S. Coast Guard	LCDR Louie C. Parks, Jr.	09/09
Drug Enforcement Administration	James Connolly	07/09

\*Note: Ambassador Avant departed post on November 21, 2011.

## Abbreviations

BBG	Broadcasting Board of Governors
CBP	Bureau of U.S. Customs and Border Protection
CLO	Community liaison office
COM	Chief of Mission
DCM	Deputy chief of mission
Department	U.S. Department of State
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunity
FAH	<i>Foreign Affairs Handbook</i>
FAM	<i>Foreign Affairs Manual</i>
ICASS	International Cooperative Administrative Support Services
LE	Locally employed
MSRP	Mission Strategic and Resource Plan
OIG	Office of Inspector General
PAO	Public affairs officer
PAS	Public affairs section

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

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

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

202-647-3320  
800-409-9926

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

oig.state.gov

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

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~