



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

Office of Inspections

Inspection of Embassy San José, Costa Rica

Report Number ISP-I-12-23A, May 2012

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PURPOSE, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY OF THE INSPECTION

This inspection was conducted in accordance with the Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation, as issued in 2011 by the Council of Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency, and the Inspector's Handbook, as issued by the Office of Inspector General 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.



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PREFACE

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

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

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

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

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

Harold W. Geisel
Deputy Inspector General

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Key Judgments

- The embassy's policy direction and advocacy, led by the Ambassador, is strong and effective, as is the embassy's commercial advocacy in support of the administration's National Export Initiative.
- The embassy's law enforcement working group and many informal channels have ensured strong and effective collaboration among U.S. agencies and sections working to help improve Costa Rican public security institutions to counter criminal activity and narcotics trafficking.
- Economic reporting and analysis is good, but the embassy should increase reporting and analysis on political and cross-cutting law-enforcement-related issues, and on regional environmental, science, and technology topics.
- Public affairs concerns are integrated with all the embassy's activities and the Ambassador and the public diplomacy section lead outreach efforts, including presentations through Costa Rican social media that advance U.S. interests in Costa Rica.
- The extensive preparatory efforts for ambassadorial outreach activities call for a reduced number of engagements to ensure that disproportionate embassy human resources are not directed to this aspect of the embassy's activities.
- Consular operations are well managed with excellent customer service. Consular managers have leveraged the experience of locally employed (LE) staff to develop a strong orientation program and written standard operating procedures. The section is well integrated with the rest of the embassy.
- The management section operates as a cohesive team, delivering quality services to its customers, implementing major Department of State (Department) initiatives and leveraging technology to improve its business processes. Rightsizing of the information management and financial management offices could yield monetary benefits of at least \$567,000 without affecting performance.

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 January 17 and February 3, 2012, and in San José, Costa Rica, between March 2 and 16, 2012. [REDACTED]

Context

Costa Rica is a middle income country with a relatively homogenous population of 4.5 million that abolished its military in 1948, allowing it to invest resources in a strong system of social services, including education. Its literacy rate is 95 percent, the highest in Latin America. Costa Rica is stable, with decades of experience promoting human rights and democracy within the region and globally. Ex-President Oscar Arias (1986-1990, 2006-2010) is a Nobel Peace Prize winner for his promotion of peace agreements in Central America. Costa Rica's diversified economy is mainly nonagricultural. Well over half of foreign direct investment is from the United States. Costa Rica is notable for its leadership in protecting its environment and biodiversity, which generates substantial tourism revenues from all areas of the globe.

Costa Rica exercises diplomatic influence well beyond its relatively small size. U.S.-Costa Rican relations are positive in many fields and in regional and multilateral fora. The United States is Costa Rica's leading trade partner and ranks first among foreign investors.

Costa Rica is a major tourist destination, averaging about 1 million American tourists yearly. In addition, an estimated 135,000 Americans, including many retirees and students, reside in the country. Indicative of a serious problem with crime, the rate of lost or stolen U.S. passports is among the highest in any foreign country.

As other governments in the region take measures to combat narcotics traffickers and transnational criminal organizations, Costa Rica, long an oasis of calm, has become vulnerable to the incursion of sophisticated criminal operations. The current government's policy priority is protecting citizen security, and Costa Rica is integrally engaged on regional security cooperation with hemispheric partners, including the United States. U.S. investors are also participating in an innovative public-private partnership to improve customs and border control enforcement.

The Department is the largest U.S. agency in Embassy San José. U.S. agencies involved on law enforcement issues include the Drug Enforcement Administration, a Department of the Treasury Office of Technical Assistance, and the U.S. Coast Guard leading the Office of the Defense Representative. The Foreign Commercial Service, Food and Drug Administration, Foreign Agriculture Service, and a regional Animal Plant and Health Inspection Service office contribute to mission efforts to increase U.S. exports and reduce technical barriers to trade. Costa Rica is not eligible for development assistance; however, the mission is host to a unit of the U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID) Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance because of the central location and good infrastructure to respond to regional natural and humanitarian disasters. Peace Corps will celebrate its 50th anniversary in Costa Rica in 2013 and has more than 110 volunteers working in community development and English teaching.

Staffing for Embassy San José consists of 54 Department direct-hires, 35 other agency direct-hires, 25 local U.S. hires, and 169 LE staff. According to information available to the inspection team, funding to all agencies at post in FY 2011 totaled \$36.8 million. The embassy was last inspected in 2006.

Executive Direction

The Ambassador, with the assistance of the deputy chief of mission (DCM), takes a strong role in leading a well-integrated, multiagency, country team effort to advocate on behalf of U.S. policy goals in Costa Rica. Interagency relations are productive and cordial, and the Ambassador and DCM have worked to promote intensified collaboration among agencies.

Policy Direction and Coordination

The Ambassador has set forth a clear policy agenda for the embassy in keeping with the broad U.S. goals for Central America. This agenda features the effort to help improve Costa Rica's public security institutions to counter criminal activity and narcotics trafficking so as to provide a safe and secure environment for Costa Ricans and American visitors and residents. It also includes the effort to advance U.S. interests in increased exports and shared interests in economic growth, sustainable energy, and the environment. The Ambassador and DCM participate actively in the law enforcement working group, and they reinvigorated an economy, environment, and energy group to promote greater collaboration of embassy offices and agencies working on their parts of the agenda. The Ambassador and DCM are very knowledgeable about all these activities and participate actively in the numerous engagements flowing from export promotion, law enforcement assistance, and sustainable environmental and energy activities. The Ambassador and the DCM engage frequently with Costa Rican Government and private sector leaders on these issues and are also active in U.S. interagency policy discussions. For example, the Ambassador has taken a strong stand in favor of a more regional U.S. approach to issues in Central America.

The embassy's FY 2013 Mission Strategic and Resource Plan (MSRP) was a highly participative effort to capture and integrate all embassy units and objectives within a single document. The plan benefits from being comprehensive and including all agencies and offices in a whole-of-government effort. The whole-of-government effort was also reflected in the tracking of all U.S. Government assistance to Costa Rica from all sources, by goal, in the embassy's internal assistance tracker SharePoint site, which has been provided to Costa Rican authorities when useful. The diffuse nature of the MSRP goals, however, conveys the impression that the embassy can pursue a wide variety of goals without making difficult choices among them. In practice, the embassy makes choices but needs to focus its activities on the greatest U.S. interests and what is achievable with available resources. The embassy is currently preparing a Mission Resource Request¹ that focuses on a smaller number of goals.

The Ambassador and DCM advocate frequently and effectively on behalf of U.S. policy and on behalf of U.S. economic and business interests in support of the administration's National Export Initiative. They have good access to and influence with Costa Rican Government and private sector leaders. The Ambassador generally engages at the ministerial level and the DCM at the vice ministerial level. Given the broad array of U.S. interests and expertise in the country team, it is important that the Ambassador and DCM include, as a regular practice, appropriate

¹ In December 2011, the Department issued 11 STATE 124737, which discontinued the Mission Strategic and Resource Plan. The Mission Resource Request (3-year strategic plans, with shorter annual resource requests) replaces the Mission Strategic and Resource Plan beginning with the FY 2014 budget cycle.

country team members in their meetings. The embassy also needs to share insights and opportunities discussed in official and private sector meetings more widely through official channels. This issue is addressed in greater detail in the Political/Economic section of this report.

The Ambassador has made a point of broadening the embassy's contacts across Costa Rica's vibrant private and nongovernmental sectors and has often served as a catalyst for productive interchange, particularly in the areas of sustainable energy and the environment.

The Ambassador and DCM take an active interest in the embassy's public diplomacy activities and have ensured that public affairs concerns are integrated into all the embassy's programs. The Ambassador gives many speeches and remarks throughout Costa Rica and makes active use of social media to broaden the embassy's outreach. Substantial effort goes into preparation, which sometimes has the effect of crowding out other embassy work. The embassy has decided to designate the DCM to manage priorities and workload for these engagements and to broaden the number of speakers and participants from within the embassy, as discussed in the Public Diplomacy section of this report.

Informal Recommendation 1: Embassy San José should reduce the number of ambassadorial events and speeches that require extensive preparatory work and consume excessive embassy resources.

Internal Management

The Ambassador, the DCM, the two office management specialists, and the protocol assistant work well together. The executive office also provides good supervision and support for an effective management section. The DCM meets frequently with the management officer and is well informed on management operations in the embassy. The Ambassador and DCM have intervened, when asked, with Costa Rican authorities, such as when the local social security authority ceased to recognize as adequate the embassy's contribution to the system, raising concerns among LE staff members about whether they will receive benefits when needed. This issue is discussed more fully under the Human Resources section of this report.

The executive office team is fully engaged in reviewing requests from all sections and agencies under National Security Decision Directive 38 to increase or decrease staff and weighs appropriately policy, management, and security support factors in its decisions.

Preparation of Ambassador's Travel and Briefing Material

The inspection team reviewed the embassy's internal SharePoint site and conducted research to determine the extent of the work involved in preparing the Ambassador's travel and briefing materials. The Ambassador's goal is to be adequately prepared for each visit or meeting by having background material about the issue, biographical material about participants, and high-quality speeches in English, with Spanish translations.

The inspection team observed that those called upon to serve as control officers prepare multiple iterations of itineraries, speeches, and extensive background material. Extensive instructions on the embassy's internal SharePoint site outline how to request appointments with

the Ambassador, how to prepare remarks for her, and how to handle control officer duties. These instructions require drafts to be prepared on paper and delivered to the executive office. Better use of technology could streamline this process and save time. It would also align with and reinforce the Ambassador's goals of running an environmentally sustainable embassy.

Informal Recommendation 2: Embassy San José should make greater use of technology in preparing, submitting, and editing material for the executive office.

Spanish translation of prepared speeches is the responsibility of the control officer; most control officers call on the LE staff in their sections for help. Because the LE staff may not be familiar with the substance of the issue, translations must be corrected later in the process. A designated translator could develop the needed expertise as well as understanding of the Ambassador's communication style, and would more efficiently handle translation.

Informal Recommendation 3: Embassy San José should designate a qualified locally employed staff member to translate the Ambassador's speeches and remarks.

The Ambassador and DCM demonstrated interest in and support for consular operations. The Ambassador includes consular outreach in her trips throughout the country and taps consular officers to serve as control officers, giving them professional development opportunities. The DCM regularly visits the consular section to hold biweekly meetings with consular management. Both promote consular outreach to the American business and education community, and they engage with the Costa Rican Government officials as needed on consular issues.

Morale

(b) (5) [REDACTED] The Ambassador and the DCM are visible in the embassy and host events for the community, and the DCM visits offices within the embassy frequently.

(b) (5) [REDACTED] The executive office has committed to provide unambiguous direction, take on only those activities that can be well prepared and staffed, and give the DCM a greater role in prioritizing activities.

Entry-Level Professionals

The DCM engages frequently with entry-level professionals through meetings and by visiting them in their work spaces. The DCM and other embassy officers also make themselves available to advise and counsel entry-level professionals on issues such as bidding and evaluation reports. The embassy gives entry-level professionals career development opportunities in staffing executive office activities. The OIG team met with an organized group of entry-level professionals and urged them to broaden the scope of their suggestions for professional development activities.

Security

The Ambassador and the DCM provide strong support to the embassy's security program. The DCM meets frequently with the regional security officer, understands the issues, and provides appropriate direction.

Policy and Program Implementation

Policy advocacy is strong and technical assistance implementation is integrated across sections and agencies. Interagency relationships are productive and collegial. The embassy often refers to a wide range of activities in the FY 2013 MSRP to review its work.

Led by the Ambassador, multiple sections and agencies engage in commercial advocacy. These efforts have led to total U.S. agricultural exports increasing at a rate of more than 10 percent annually. The embassy also promotes concession arrangements by which construction of Costa Rican infrastructure projects would be paid by operating fees. An increase in concession agreements can help expand U.S. goods and services exports beyond the 40 percent share already held in Costa Rica's market. Costa Rica's decision in June 2011 to recognize U.S. Food and Drug Administration certification as an acceptable standard for the import of U.S. medical equipment and devices promises to substantially increase sales to Costa Rica. The embassy is raising awareness about Costa Rica's regulatory decision to replicate the practice regionally.

Political/Economic Section

The combined political/economic section includes a narcotics affairs unit. A counselor, an economic unit chief, and a narcotics affairs unit chief capably lead a team that includes an office management specialist, three entry-level officers, and an eligible family member, all of whom employ Spanish skills well. The section benefits from five bilingual, qualified LE staff members, including an economist. The LE staff has appropriate training and decades of experience that provide continuity to embassy operations.

The counselor and unit chiefs are attentive to mentoring and tradecraft coaching even though the two unit chiefs are themselves relatively inexperienced. (b) (5) employees enjoy the diverse range of work and are mutually supportive. (b) (5)

The economic unit carves out time to produce a steady series of analytic reporting on local developments, for example, telecommunications deregulation and barriers to entry in insurance services. Officials in economic agencies welcome these analyses that outline implications for U.S. companies seeking to penetrate the Costa Rican market. The reports help measure Costa Rica's progress in implementing the terms of the Central America Free Trade Agreement legislation. Washington consumers praise voluntary reporting such as one entitled "Enter the Dragon," which addresses aspects of China's economic penetration in Central America.

In balancing its workload, the political unit generates mainly replies on démarche instructions, short spot reports, and summaries of official visits. Similarly, the narcotics unit generates cables of monthly project status summaries. For expediency, information and comments are sent informally by email to a small circle of individuals in the Department or other agencies rather than by official record traffic that makes information accessible to a wider audience.

In the inspection survey phase, official consumers commented on a cable about passage of a bill to raise tax revenue to fund Costa Rican President Chinchilla's plans to strengthen law enforcement and security capabilities. That cable was cited to illustrate a desire for follow-on analytic reports with insight on the dynamics between the Costa Rican administration and its opposition in the legislature. On cross-cutting topics such as corruption or money-laundering, the embassy could produce periodic analyses of the scope of issues, the influence of specific Costa Ricans, and the impact of U.S. assistance.

Informal Recommendation 4: Embassy San José should increase the analytic content of reporting.

The embassy has made good use of LE staff and eligible family members to meet its growing workload. The inspection team endorses the recent rightsizing justification for an additional officer to conduct diplomatic reporting and representation and to help increase analysis.

Narcotics Affairs Unit

In late 2010 and early 2011, project management skills were inadequate at a time when Central American Regional Security Initiative funding surged due to a shift in narcotics trafficking patterns toward Costa Rica. As a result, the unit was unable to develop scopes of work for projects for official Costa Rican concurrence or to implement activities in a timely fashion. Of \$13.3 million in multiyear obligated funds in the pipeline, the embassy was able to disburse funds at a rate of about \$1.3 million yearly rather than a desired disbursal pace of \$4.5 million yearly.

The embassy successfully recruited from existing officers an alternative unit chief who has private sector experience in project management and strong interpersonal skills. In addition, the law enforcement team has refocused its acquisitions approach in favor of bigger ticket items and stopped procurement of items that are more appropriately the responsibility of the Costa Rican Government. As a result, the narcotics affairs unit is well on track to improve performance.

Staff from the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs acknowledged to the inspection team that its funding streams, procurement processes, and accountability are complex and operationally time consuming for embassy officers. The inspection team supports the already planned increase in the unit's staffing by two personal services contractors and three to four LE positions, funded by the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, to accelerate project implementation. The new positions will be engaged in Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs program activities, with administrative and logistical support purchased from the embassy's International Cooperative Administrative and Support Services (ICASS).

Law Enforcement Working Group

Representatives of more than 10 offices and agencies participate weekly in a law enforcement working group that strives to avoid duplication and optimize collaboration on

programs and projects. They develop strategies to more effectively engage Costa Rican authorities bilaterally, through regional fora and with other donors, in strengthening its security and antinarcotics trafficking capabilities.

The working group prepares advance agendas and disseminates the minutes of each meeting and other information on the embassy's internal SharePoint site. The information on the site is not retained as official records in accordance with 5 *Foreign Affairs Manual* (FAM) 422, 422.1 a., and 5 FAM 440, using the Department's Traffic Analysis and Geographic Terms System. Failure to retain these records risks the loss of the data for future staff at the embassy and for retrieval by Department users and for historical purposes.

Recommendation 1: Embassy San José should maintain an official file of law enforcement working group meeting minutes with the appropriate traffic analysis and geographic terms. (Action: Embassy San José)

Environment, Science, Technology, and Health Affairs Regional Hub

One officer and three LE employees staff a regional hub, which supports officers with environment, science, technology, and health affairs (ESTH) responsibilities in 22 embassies in Central America and the Caribbean. The ESTH hub's mandate is to boost the capacity of national authorities and civil societies, including the private sector, to combine economic development with environmental protection.

ESTH hub activities are intended to focus on transnational, multilateral, and international dimensions, but the embassy's ESTH activities are mostly bilateral. The ESTH hub has travel and representational funds, and the current hub officer who arrived in summer 2011 has made two trips in his first 6 months to neighboring embassies. The officer's performance is rated by the DCM but reviewed by an officer in the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs to underscore the importance of the regional responsibilities.

The ESTH hub staff engages closely with embassy offices and agencies and the inspection team observed that most of their time is spent on bilateral activities. Costa Rica is a leader in environmentally sustainable development, and is an active member of regional ESTH-related organizations. In contrast, smaller Caribbean and Central American countries are much less able to protect their natural resources while developing their economies. The ESTH hub staff is not concentrating the majority of its efforts on assisting countries with the greatest need.

Recommendation 2: Embassy San José, in coordination with the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Science Affairs, should manage the workload of the environment, science, technology, and health affairs hub officer and staff to reflect regional priorities. (Action: Embassy San José, in coordination with OES)

The inspection team concurs with the February 2012 rightsizing report, which concluded that the embassy's request for a second ESTH officer is unwarranted.

The ESTH hub officer who arrived in August 2011 has oversight responsibility for several grants and has resources to make grants. The incumbent initially did not have grants

officer training. He does not have grants authority. Foreign Service Institute courses are available to complete the required training. Lack of a grants officer certification risks misuse or poor accountability of U.S. funds.

Recommendation 3: Embassy San José should require its environment, science, technology, and health affairs hub officer to complete all appropriate grants officer courses and obtain a grants warrant. (Action: Embassy San José)

Foreign Assistance

Costa Rica is not eligible for development assistance. In addition to Central American Regional Security Initiative funding for technical assistance, the embassy deploys resources from the Department of Defense's Southern Command and makes ample use of funds from various Department functional bureaus and other Federal sources. The Ambassador closely tracks these activities. With inclusion of public diplomacy scholarships and grants, and resources from other American entities, the embassy has catalogued in a consolidated assistance tracker database approximately \$40 million of U.S. contributions toward Costa Rica over the years 2010-2014.

Common Issues

Leahy Human Rights Case Vetting

The embassy is not complying with the Leahy program to preclude U.S. assistance to persons implicated in human rights violations. Department of State and Department of Defense-funded training and equipment can only be provided to properly vetted entities and individuals. Based on Costa Rica's reputation over decades of respect for human rights and democratic processes, the Department's Leahy working group has designated it for Fast Track processing of Leahy cases.

It is unlikely that Costa Rican trainees subject to Leahy vetting have committed human rights violations. However, sections of the embassy arrange for training of Costa Ricans subject to Leahy review without vetting trainee names with other elements of the embassy. The Fast Track status also requires record-keeping procedures. The International Vetting and Security Tracking database is the Department's official system of record for Leahy vetting cases. In September 2010, the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs instructed embassies, including those in Fast Track countries, to use the system, and to train and register embassy coordinators. The embassy has not done so.

The Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor approves each embassy's standard operating procedures for the Leahy program. Standard operating procedures need to be widely disseminated because of American employee turnover and because numerous representatives of other agencies may be unfamiliar with the Leahy program.

Recommendation 4: Embassy San José, in coordination with the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor Affairs, should issue an annual management notice explaining the scope of Leahy vetting and implement standard operating procedures. (Action: Embassy San José, in coordination with DRL)

The embassy staff does not fully understand Leahy procedures or the role of Leahy vetting coordinators. Consistent with good management practices, the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor Affairs recommends appointment of a primary and secondary coordinator so that vetting can proceed if the primary coordinator is unavailable. Each coordinator is required to complete the Foreign Service Institute's distance learning course, International Vetting and Security Tracking system: Leahy Vetting at Post (PP-410).

Recommendation 5: Embassy San José, in coordination with the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, should designate primary and secondary coordinators for the Leahy vetting program and should provide the training and authorization to use the International Vetting and Security Tracking system. (Action: Embassy San José, in coordination with DRL)

Biographic and Leadership Reporting

The embassy maintains unclassified biographic files on its internal SharePoint site. The Department desk officer has access to the SharePoint material, but other Department users do not. In prior years, the embassy established a leadership database on the Department's classified system, but the information is outdated.

The embassy can transfer unclassified material to the Costa Rica page of the Department's Diplopedia site, consistent with 2 FAM 113.3 b.(1) guidelines, to make readily available to policymakers and embassy officers, biographic files on foreign officials or private individuals who directly or indirectly influence domestic and foreign policy. In addition, to avoid the loss of knowledge useful to policymakers, embassy officers, on an ongoing basis and especially before departing for new assignments, can periodically update the leadership profiles of key Costa Ricans that are on the Department's classified system.

Informal Recommendation 5: Embassy San José should enter its unclassified biographic information on the Diplopedia OpenNet system and update the leadership profiles on the Intellipedia classified system.

Embassy staff members have extensive Costa Rican contacts in the public and private sectors. There is no sense that biographic reporting is a job for everyone who has contacts, such as the narcotics affairs staff and the regional environmental hub, and not just for political and economic officers.

Informal Recommendation 6: Embassy San José should include biographic reporting and leadership analysis responsibilities in the work requirements statements of all officers who do significant amounts of contact work.

Records Management

The political/economic section maintains files correctly and endeavors to retire official records to Department archives. Recently, political/economic section files dated from 2002-2010 were retired. The inspection team found about 5 linear feet of older political/economic files dated 2000. Retention of excessive files presents a security risk. Material meeting the definition of

official files should be archived and remaining material should be destroyed, per 5 FAM 433 and 434.2.

Recommendation 6: Embassy San José should archive or destroy all files dating from before 2002 that are held by the political/economic section. (Action: Embassy San José)

Emails that are not followed by front channel cable reporting can be prepared as record traffic. Officers are not using the record email function of the State Messaging and Archive Retrieval Toolset system. Record email is designed to archive emails that should be preserved for the historical record, such as schedules for visitors, progress reports on programs, and exchange of views on policy-related matters.

Recommendation 7: Embassy San José should implement a system for employee compliance with guidance on using the State Messaging and Archive Retrieval Toolset system to archive email and other correspondence. (Action: Embassy San José)

In prior years, the regional ESTH hub maintained files correctly. Material, including electronic mail records, are to be organized by traffic analysis and geography terms, and archived annually, as stipulated in 5 FAM 440, 5 FAM 441, and 5 FAM 443. The file maintenance has lapsed in the past year. Activities and work products are not maintained as official traffic in State Messaging and Archive Retrieval Toolset cables or as record email. Failure to maintain work products as official records prevents retrieval of the information for foreign policy use and for historians.

Recommendation 8: Embassy San José should implement a system to verify maintenance and archiving of files by the environment, science, technology, and health hub office. (Action: Embassy San José)

Public Diplomacy

An experienced public affairs officer, assisted by a first-time information officer and an entry-level cultural affairs officer, supervises a wide range of public diplomacy activities conducted by 13 LE staff members. Public affairs concerns are woven into all of the MSRP goals and shape the structure and content of embassy activities. The section has excellent relations and works closely with all sections and agencies resident in San José.

Much of the embassy's outreach is done through or markedly enhanced by creative and thorough use of social media. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and a bilingual Web site are all extensively promoted. For example, the audience for a recent presentation by an American astronaut discussing sustainable growth and alternate energy themes was tripled, and expanded to interested viewers in Central America and South America via live streaming on the Internet combined with virtual chat room interaction.

The embassy Facebook community includes some prominent legislators, opinion leaders, and academics, and at 41,000 followers is larger than the daily circulation of many of San José's newspapers and magazines. The embassy's Facebook penetration statistics and interaction rates are the third best in the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs. The embassy Twitter feeds

cross-promote with Facebook, linking Bureau of International Information and Programming-generated content, which is then sometimes used by traditional media journalists. Almost all embassy external activity, from ambassadorial speeches to seminars, training events, and cultural performances, are heavily promoted on social media.

While the public diplomacy section analysis recognizes that the traditional media is still the paramount vehicle for getting the embassy's themes and messages across to Costa Rican audiences, the heavy demand on staff to develop social media products can leave insufficient time for more traditional media placement and meaningful, consistent interaction with key opinion leaders. Occasionally social media products are less substantive and have more of an entertainment character. Three LE staff members (or one-quarter of public diplomacy local staff) work on social media exclusively. The information officer spends close to 40 percent of his time on social media and the public affairs officer a lesser but significant amount. Interaction of both officers with the traditional media occurs most often at press events and mostly with mid-level journalists.

One-on-one contact work with the editors of major newspapers and the news directors and managers of television and radio stations is infrequent and of a lower priority. Many of these critical opinion multipliers are infrequent social media users. The public affairs officer developed an excellent influence analysis survey of Costa Rican media influencers but has not taken steps to consistently work with the key individuals identified.

Informal Recommendation 7: Embassy San José should carefully analyze and monitor both social media activity and more traditional approaches to reaching key opinion leaders so that the embassy effectively and consistently reaches critical audiences.

The Ambassador values public diplomacy outreach as a critical embassy activity and is in fact at the heart of much of the section's programming effort. The Ambassador is in demand to make presentations at all major events in Costa Rica. Her presence ensures a high-level audience and added seriousness to the discussions. There are few speaking opportunities for other senior embassy officers, including the DCM, which can lead at times to overtaxing the Ambassador's schedule or deferring speaking opportunities that she cannot accept.

The public diplomacy section has made good use of limited speaker offerings from the Bureau of International Information Programs and some visiting U.S. Government officials. Many embassies have American speakers programs that give embassy officers the opportunity to speak at host country high schools and universities to help counteract popular culture misrepresentations of the United States and its society. More senior officers often fill in for the Ambassador when appropriate.

Informal Recommendation 8: Embassy San José should develop an American speakers program to give embassy officials, including entry-level officers, an opportunity to speak at appropriate venues across Costa Rica.

Overall, the public affairs officer manages the section well. He oversees a diverse set of activities, including English teaching programs, journalist training, arts and literature events, and seminar discussions. His management style includes frequent individual meetings with both the

American officers and with selected LE staff. There are occasional cultural or information section meetings and ad hoc policy discussions that sometimes include LE staff. There are no regularly scheduled meetings for the entire staff with the public affairs officer.

The LE staff includes many highly trained, motivated, and dedicated employees.

(b) (5) [REDACTED] Regular meetings in the section could improve communication about goals and priorities, as well as give the LE staff a better sense of inclusion.

Informal Recommendation 9: Embassy San José should convene regularly scheduled staff meetings, including all locally employed staff, in its public diplomacy section.

Exchange Programs

The cultural affairs officer manages a large cultural and exchange program budget of \$3.8 million in Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs-supported activities, including 20 International Visitor Leadership Program grants, Fulbright and Humphrey programs, and modest cultural and speaker activities. The exchange program is the embassy's primary vehicle to build enduring Costa Rican support for the United States.

The International Visitor Leadership Program is closely tied to the MSRP goals and objectives. The DCM chairs the selection committee, and all mission sections and agencies participate in the nominating and selection process. Judicious use and timing of grantee travel and Washington incentive programs have enabled the embassy to receive several additional no-cost grants in each of the past 2 years.

Costa Rica does not have a Fulbright Commission. Instead the cultural affairs officer manages Fulbright grants, whose current recipients are both Costa Rican and U.S. senior scholars and graduate students. Three Fulbright U.S. English teaching assistants are also assigned to regional university campuses.

The cultural affairs section manages a number of non-Fulbright educational exchange programs for Costa Ricans, including a community college initiative, a global undergraduate exchange program, a summer institute on U.S. history and government participation, and a high school youth ambassadors program.

The public diplomacy section has an LE staff alumni coordinator who maintains close contact with former grantees from the Fulbright and Humphrey programs, the International Visitor Leadership Program, and other exchange programs. Ex-grantees are frequent attendees of embassy programs.

Grants Management

An administrative assistant, who has completed the requisite grants training, maintains the public diplomacy grants files. The public affairs officer holds current valid grants authority

and has undergone grants training. The public affairs officer departs post this summer. Neither the cultural affairs officer nor the information officer holds current valid grants authority. In FY 2011, Embassy San José issued 35 grants totaling \$428,044.

Informal Recommendation 10: Embassy San José should arrange for at least one additional public diplomacy officer to complete the required grants training and obtain valid grants authority before the current public affairs officer departs post.

The files for FYs 2010 and 2011 are in excellent order with all required documentation present or in the case of a few late, last quarter FY 2011 grants, pending only a final report. The grants officer's representative is in the process of obtaining those missing reports.

Information Resource Center

The embassy's Information Resource Center is located just inside the entrance of the embassy and is under the overall direction of the public affairs officer. It is not open to the public, although the center's conference room is used by the embassy for occasional video conferences and press interviews and by various embassy officers for meetings with their contacts. The staff includes a director, who is a trained research librarian, and the exchange program alumni coordinator.

The center director does extensive electronic outreach to a wide range of key embassy audiences providing article alert services and detailed research on topics tied to the MSRP. Her efforts are both proactive and responsive to growing requests from Costa Rican audiences. For example, recently the Costa Rican Legislative Assembly's head librarian asked for information on U.S. law and regulation affecting automobile drivers under the age of 18 because the assembly was considering legislation to lower the legal driving age and wanted to know how the United States handles this issue. In house, the center provides article alert services to embassy employees, does speech writing background material research, and offers similar services upon request for embassy officers' key contacts. The Mexico City-based regional information resource officer regularly visits the Information Resource Center and considers its programs among the best in her region. At the regional information resource officer's request, the director of San José's Information Resource Center hosts and trains directors from other embassy resource centers in Central America.

The center director also coordinates the activities of the American and science corners and liaises with the San José Binational Center. The American Corner, located in the municipal library of the eastern port city of Limon, has 1,500 active members and hosts 2025 embassy programs a year. The more modest Science Corner, located in the expanding northern city of Liberia on the campus of Earth University, operates 68 months a year and has a small but growing audience of university students and professors. Embassy support to both corners is modest and appropriate.

The embassy has long been a partner of the Binational Center in San José, one of the country's premier English teaching institutes and the embassy's principal programming platform in Costa Rica. The public affairs officer is a member of the center's board of directors. The center has an extensive collection of U.S.-oriented materials in its lending library, which also

houses an educational counseling office. The embassy directs all educational advising enquiries to this office. In FY 2011, the center received \$228,000 in grants from the embassy and the Department to conduct cultural programming and educational counseling, buy books, and make infrastructure improvements.

Consular Section

A consul general and 2 mid-level officers manage the consular section with 6 entry-level officers, 2 full-time and 1 part-time cleared American family member positions, and 23 LE staff members. Six LE staff members in the regional federal benefits unit are supervised by a regional federal benefits officer and use interview space in the consular section, but have separate office space elsewhere in the embassy. The consular section is well managed and provides professional services. A recent customer service survey, based on questionnaires and a suggestion box in the waiting room, provided positive feedback on the public's perception of consular operations, with 38 of 39 respondents reporting satisfaction, moving through the process in 2 hours or less. The inspection team observed clients moving through the process in a steady stream with no long lines. There was adequate overhead cover and seating, basic but functional signage, bathroom facilities, snack services, and helpful guard oversight. The work space is adequate, laid out appropriately for work flow and line-of-sight oversight. Consular officers and LE staff have cordial relations, facilitating the operation of the section.

The inspection team observed first-hand the response to a bomb threat in the waiting room during customer service hours. The integrated, professional response by consular and security personnel showed good coordination in facing a potentially life threatening situation.

Consular Management

The consul general has been at post since August 2011. She quickly identified a few areas needing corrective action and has laid out a clear process for her staff to bring the operations into compliance. For example, work requirements had been prepared but not entered into the electronic system; she ensured they were entered prior to the OIG team arrival. She has established regular staff meetings, which integrate training for the officers and senior LE staff through case study discussions. All her staff noted that she was approachable, knowledgeable, organized, and pleasant to work with. Under her leadership, consular staff noted good support from and interaction with the regional security office, the information management section, the public diplomacy section, and the management section.

The consular section manages hundreds of telephone inquiries with the help of the embassy operators, a pay-for-service nonimmigrant appointment and information line, an LE staff office manager, a full-time consular telephone receptionist, and call-in hours for American citizens services and the immigrant visa unit. In addition, an entry-level officer revamped the consular portion of the embassy's telephone tree information system. A software program, adopted as a best practice from another post, tracks inquiries; consular managers analyze the data to update their frequently asked questions on the Internet Web site. A newly launched newsletter targeted for the resident American citizen community augments general information on the Internet. LE staff answers routine email inquiries sent to dedicated email addresses, and one entry-level officer manages the more complicated correspondence for cases involving

congressional inquiries and front office interest. At the time of the inspection, the embassy was preparing to initiate participation in the Global Support Services system, an appointment, information and passback system being implemented worldwide by the Bureau of Consular Affairs.

American Citizens Services

The American citizens services unit is managed by a mid-level officer with two entry-level officers, two American family members, and seven experienced LE staff members. This is a well run unit handling a large, diverse, and complex portfolio expertly and providing excellent routine and emergency services to both the resident and visiting American citizen population. Crimes against tourists are frequent; Costa Rica is among the top locations for replacements of lost and stolen U.S. passports.

The American citizens services unit performs outreach trips to a large and dispersed resident American community, supported by the Ambassador in her travel through the country. The unit is proactive in providing information to the resident community through the innovative newsletter with active links. A complex portion of the special consular services portfolio provides services and assistance to elderly Americans who have retired in Costa Rica and death cases for those without next of kin.

The American citizens services unit also manages a large judicial cooperation portfolio. Given the large number of extraditions and returns of fugitives, one LE staff position is funded in part by the Department of Justice for handling and translating international judicial cooperation requests. Arrests, child custody cases, kidnappings, and death cases contribute to the range of emergency services cases, which are handled with professional competence and good customer service. This year, Costa Rica has been found noncompliant with the Hague Convention on International Parental Child Abduction. The Ambassador conducted a démarche to the Government of Costa Rica regarding the finding of noncompliance, reflecting high-level interest in and attention to this issue.

Nonimmigrant Visas

The nonimmigrant visa unit is led by a mid-level officer and staffed with four entry-level officers, one part-time cleared American eligible family member and nine LE staff members. They adjudicate approximately 55,000 nonimmigrant visa applications annually with an 11 percent refusal rate. The appointment system works effectively and interviews are generally completed during the morning hours. The waiting period for nonimmigrant appointments for the past year never extended beyond 16 days and for most of the year was 1 week or less. Officers have sufficient language skills to conduct interviews in Spanish and one officer uses Chinese language skills on a regular basis. LE staff members rotate through all the processing functions and are cross-trained; most visas are sent out by courier the day of the interview.

The visa chief had fallen behind on visa adjudication reviews; the inspection team counseled him on the importance of performing the reviews on a daily basis and using them, along with other management tools, to oversee visa adjudication. The DCM was performing adjudication reviews on a monthly basis but began doing them weekly when reminded to do so

by the inspectors. The consul general had discovered several concerns while performing adjudication reviews, which are discussed separately in the management controls section of the report. In addition to ensuring proper adjudication, the reviews can be used for training and counseling adjudicating officers on trends, interview techniques, appropriate action on system information, and writing clear concise notes.

Informal Recommendation 11: Embassy San José should conduct visa adjudication reviews on a daily basis.

Visa Referral Program

The visa referral program is in good order. The Ambassador and DCM generally do not make referrals; the short waiting times and effective policy for expediting appointments render many referrals unnecessary. The referral policy has been published, appropriate officers adjudicate the visas, and documentation is scanned into the system. The consul general identified a processing error, which had been routine when she arrived, and has taken steps to correct it. She has been working with the Bureau of Consular Affairs to harness technology to correct historical data in the system.

Visas Viper

The consul general or fraud prevention manager participates in the law enforcement working group, which meets weekly. This group also serves as the Visas Viper committee. All Visas Viper monthly reports were submitted on time over the year preceding the inspection. Five cables were sent with Visas Viper submissions during this time period.

Immigrant Visas

The immigrant visa unit is supervised by the visa chief, and the entry-level officers rotate through as adjudicating officers. Three experienced LE staff members handle a relatively stable workload of about 750 cases annually. Immigrant visa appointments are scheduled for afternoons, making good use of the interview windows and balancing the flow of applicants over the course of the day.

Fraud Prevention Unit

The part-time fraud prevention manager is a second-tour officer who reports to the visa chief. Two LE staff investigators work effectively in reviewing cases referred to the unit. The fraud profile for visa cases is moderate. The unit supports the American citizens services unit on the broad range of judicial cooperation cases, extraditions, and returns of fugitives.

An assistant regional security officer for investigations and one local investigator are scheduled to be added to the consular section in June. The consular section and regional security office are already working to delineate areas for coordination and cooperation. The management officer has prepared plans to renovate adjacent space and create appropriate offices for the new staff.

Resource Management

Agency	U.S. Direct-Hire Staff	U.S. Local-Hire Staff	Foreign National Staff	Total Staff	Total Funding FY 2011 (\$)
Department of State					
D&CP	26	3	24	53	\$3,293,006
CA	10	0	0	10	\$487,801
MRV	0	5	9	14	\$53,592
ICASS - TRADITIONAL	3	14	80	97	\$4,978,600
ICASS - OBO					\$221,700
ICASS - DS					\$384,500
Public Diplomacy	3	1	12	16	\$1,205,810
Diplomatic Security	4	1	8	13	\$1,607,003
Marine Security Guards	6		4	10	\$168,120
OBO/Facility Manager	1			1	\$17,045
Representation Funding					\$44,309
Federal Benefits Unit	1		6	7	\$115,000
INL					\$500,000
Department of Agriculture					
Foreign Agriculture Service	2		5	7	\$356,485
Animal Plant Health Inspection Service	1		3	4	\$779,586
HHS/Food and Drug Administration	4		2	6	\$314,200
Department of Defense					
Office of the Defense Representative	7	0	3	10	\$800,000
Department of Justice					
Drug Enforcement Administration	8	1	3	12	\$491,314
Foreign Commercial Service	1		5	6	\$332,802
USAID					
Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance	6		2	8	\$1,072,575
Peace Corps	4		3	7	\$2,190,186
Treasury Advisors	2			2	\$80,000
Other Foreign Assistance					0
All Programs - Detailed List Available					\$17,305,000
Totals	89	25	169	283	\$36,798,634

Management Section

The management section is cohesive, customer oriented, competent, and capable. It is well-led and delivers good services to its customers. The U.S. direct-hire and LE staff complement one another and project a unity of effort in their planning and conduct of business. OIG workplace and quality of life survey results exceeded the averages of other posts in most major management areas. Respondents rated both overall management section performance and overall customer service at 4.32 on a 5-point scale, which compared favorably with other posts' averages of 3.77 and 3.76, respectively.

Routine management operations function generally well, thereby allowing the management staff to focus on more strategic activities. These include extensive implementation of the Department's Collaborative Management Initiative, process mapping and improvement, fulfillment of ICASS council and committee requirements, and leveraging of technology to improve operations and knowledge sharing. With few exceptions, the management section is appropriately staffed and takes advantage of eligible family member employees to support U.S. direct-hire and LE staff in several units. The ICASS Service Center's 2012 Staffing Analysis, which measures workload per LE staff member, showed the vast majority of cost centers well within the standard range, indicating satisfactory levels of productivity.

Rightsizing

The Department completed a rightsizing review of U.S. Mission Costa Rica on February 27, 2012. The inspection team agreed in large part with the conclusions of the review but recommends in this report that the embassy seek additional reductions in its financial management LE staff by making use of the Department's Post Support Unit for processing vouchers. The team also noted that the Department review projects a total of three information resources management U.S. direct hires, which is one fewer than currently on staff. The inspection team concurs and makes a related recommendation in the Information Management and Security section of this report.

Consolidation of Services

The embassy is subject to recent cable guidance from the Department (State 11450, dated February 7, 2012) that seeks to consolidate services and thereby establish one administrative support platform at overseas posts. The cable directs chiefs of mission and USAID directors to complete action on the consolidation of 15 agreed administrative services by September 2012. It also directs consolidation of household furniture, furnishings, and appliance pool services, with specific implementation instructions to follow. The embassy is aware of its upcoming responsibility to address redundancies, such as lack of a furniture pool.

Financial Management

The financial management unit is staffed with a first-time financial management officer supported by 14 local national employees. Averages on the OIG workplace and quality of life questionnaire give the unit high scores across the board.

Staffing

At the time of the inspection, the embassy was planning to eliminate one vacant voucher clerk position. Despite this reduction, the unit is still overstaffed when compared with its counterparts in similarly sized embassies. The recently completed rightsizing review of the embassy also found the financial management unit to be well above the norm for missions of comparable size in the same operating environment. Even though the review supported elimination of two positions by 2016, the inspection team concluded that there is even more scope for position savings.

At the time of the inspection, the embassy was not using Post Support Unit services to process vouchers, even though the costs are roughly half of what the embassy spends to process a voucher. The embassy plans to begin outsourcing travel voucher processing to the Post Support Unit. However, there are opportunities for the embassy to outsource other voucher processing and thus generate additional cost savings. A review of voucher processing, in coordination with a staffing review and analysis, could lead to the reduction of several positions in the financial management unit and in so doing bring the unit's strength closer to staffing levels in comparable sized embassies.

Recommendation 9: Embassy San José should process all travel vouchers through the Post Support Unit and implement a plan to outsource other categories of vouchers to the Post Support Unit. (Action: Embassy San José)

Recommendation 10: Embassy San José should implement a plan to rightsize staffing in its financial management unit based on workload analysis, outsourcing of voucher processing, and comparable staffing at similarly sized embassies. (Action: Embassy San José)

Cashiering

The cashier is a 40-year veteran of embassy service and has been the Class B cashier for 32 years. The financial management officer performed, and an inspector observed, a cash reconciliation, with no anomalies found. The cashier is authorized a (b) (5) cash advance that seems appropriate considering the amount of business she conducts. A local bank performs accommodation exchange. The last cashier monitor's review was performed in 2008 and no major defects were recorded. The next cashier monitor visit will be in 2013.

The inspection team noted early in the inspection that the embassy appeared to have an excess of subcashiers. During the inspection, the number of subcashiers was reduced by three. Subcashier reconciliations are performed in a timely manner.

International Cooperative Administrative and Support Services

The ICASS council and budget committee meet frequently to address issues of mutual concern among agencies at the embassy. The council maintains minutes and reviews budgets on a timely basis. The ICASS structure and mechanisms work well in San José. The inspection team reminded the ICASS council and the management officer to comply with the new annual assessment requirements outlined in 6 *Foreign Affairs Handbook* (FAH)-5 H-222.3-5 and 3.6.

This report, drafted by the ICASS council chairperson and the management officer, is due to the Ambassador by June 1 annually.

Utility Usage

The embassy has a number of environmental initiatives under way in the chancery, including extensive recycling. Nevertheless, there is scope for promoting energy cost savings in U.S. Government-owned and leased residences. Utility usage at some residences appears reasonable, but there are quite a few residences where utility usage seems high. Not all employees are made aware of the costs associated with their utility use.

Informal Recommendation 12: Embassy San José should expand its utility cost monitoring to provide all employees information concerning their monthly utility usage and offer helpful tips to employees regarding ways to conserve energy and reduce costs.

Human Resources

The human resources unit consists of five LE staff members, which is appropriate for an embassy of this size. The unit is supervised by the management officer in San José. An American regional human resources officer from the Florida Regional Center visits regularly to provide advice and assistance to the embassy. A memorandum of understanding completed in March 2011 details the responsibilities of both the embassy and the regional center. Some embassy employees lament the fact that San José does not have a resident human resources officer, but the inspection team concluded that the current system is working well.

The human resources unit performs its tasks efficiently and effectively. Evaluation reports for Americans and LE staff are completed on time. The LE staff handbook is current; the awards program is largely automated and managed on the embassy's internal SharePoint site; overtime is approved in advance; and an adequate training plan is in place.

Locally Employed Staff

(b) (5)

For example, the embassy sought and received authorization to automatically increase the salaries of FSN grade 1 employees when Costa Rica increases its minimum wage scale and employees' salaries have fallen below the minimum wage. The embassy also worked with the Department to establish a flexible work schedule for LE staff. Most choose to work 40 hours within a four-and-a-half day workweek. Many LE staff cited this schedule as proof that management cares about its needs.

(b) (5)

allegation by the Costa Rican social security system that the embassy, and by extension its employees, owes the system \$360,000 in arrears. The embassy has done its best to resolve this issue and has obtained a diplomatic note from the Costa Rican Ministry of Foreign Affairs confirming that a \$1.5 million payment made to the Costa Rican social security system in 2010 constituted full and final

payment under the Costa Rican Workers Protection Law. Yet practical problems persist. For example, the embassy cannot purchase duty-free gasoline for government-owned vehicles, and LE staff health entitlement cards are now stamped with the word “delinquent” in Spanish. As a result, some LE staff members have reported denials of service as they attempt to use the Costa Rican health system. The embassy has been forthcoming and transparent with the LE staff while continuing to work with the Foreign Ministry and the Department to resolve this issue.

Eligible Family Member Employment

Eighteen eligible family member positions are available at the embassy. At the time of the inspection, 15 of the positions were filled. The embassy has reported no issues relating to family employment, and the Family Liaison Office in Washington gives high marks to the embassy for its efforts to promote these employment opportunities.

Rest and Recuperation Travel

Embassy employees do not receive a post differential allowance, but are authorized rest and recuperation travel twice during a 3-year tour, with Miami as the designated continental U.S. destination. The last Department approval in the embassy files was dated 2001. During FY 2011, the embassy spent almost \$50,000 on rest and recuperation travel for Department employees and has budgeted \$124,000 for this expense in FY 2012. At the time of the inspection, the Department was in the process of conducting a worldwide analysis of posts to determine eligibility for rest and recuperation travel.

General Services

The general services unit is leanly staffed but very productive. The subunits perform well and customer satisfaction is high. OIG survey results in six of eight general services areas exceeded the average scores for surveys of other posts. Implementation of the Integrated Logistics Management System in 2008 has been beneficial for both the property management and procurement units. It also provides a means for units to interface at key junctures in the supply chain management system, facilitating coordination between procurement, receiving, property control, financial management, and the customer. The system enforces process discipline and allows visibility by participants along the way, thereby strengthening internal controls. The inspection team did note some areas for improvement, particularly in property management and motor vehicle operations.

Property Management

With only six LE staff members supervised by a general services assistant who is an eligible family member, the property unit provides full and satisfactory service to its customers. Records indicated major inventory control problems in FY 2008 and embassy actions to remediate them. Current property management is generally sound. Since the FY 2008 certification that reported a nonexpendable inventory shortage of 8.76 percent, the embassy has maintained much better control over property. Despite the improvement, the embassy continues to show shortages, though they remain consistently below the 1 percent threshold that requires a property survey report. In FY 2011, the shortage totaled \$27,275 and included two laptop

computers and several computer central processing units. The Property Disposal Authorization and Survey Report, form DS-132, did not indicate that the property management officer conducted any investigation to verify facts and determine any corrective actions necessary, as required by 14 FAM 416.5-1(B)b.

Recommendation 11: Embassy San José should comply with all the Property Disposal Authorization and Survey Report (DS-132) requirements, including investigation of inventory shortages found during the annual inventory process and survey board referral, if appropriate. (Action: Embassy San José)

The receiving clerk is familiar with his duties and performs them satisfactorily, though the inspection team noted some areas for improvement that could speed up the process and improve internal controls. First, many items arrive without any reference to the corresponding purchase order. The receiving clerk must comb through pending orders to identify the one that relates to the item and to facilitate receiving and final delivery to customers.

Informal Recommendation 13: Embassy San José should implement a standard operating procedure to instruct vendors to correlate the items they ship with purchase order numbers.

Second, the receiving clerk does not routinely followup on purchase orders for which items are not received. For example, the oldest purchase order dated back almost 1 year and still remained outstanding, though 14 FAH-1 H-313.5 instructs receiving clerks to periodically inform the procurement staff of pending and partial orders for which the delivery date has passed. Doing so could generate action to contact the vendor or otherwise determine the status of the procurement to ultimately fulfill the customer's request.

Informal Recommendation 14: Embassy San José should implement a plan to follow up on the status of ordered items that are not received as part of its supply chain management process.

Third, some items bypass the central receiving point, which is located at the warehouse facility. Some items arrive via pouch; local vendors sometimes deliver items directly to the embassy rather than the receiving point. Items therefore are not processed as received or entered, if appropriate, into the nonexpendable property system for accountability. Guidance in 14 FAH-1 H-312 encourages the receiving activity to be centralized to the extent feasible to ensure that deliveries are properly documented upon receipt.

Informal Recommendation 15: Embassy San José should implement a plan to centralize receiving to the extent feasible at its warehouse facility.

Motor Pool Operations

Motor vehicle operations have shortcomings in a number of areas that range from policy to preventive maintenance and from use of forms to the control of fuel. The very high customer satisfaction level reflected in the OIG work and quality of life survey belies the deficiencies in management of basic functions. The unit partially implemented the Department's Vehicle

Registration and Maintenance computer application in 2006, but not completely enough to take advantage of automation or increase efficiency. Using only the dispatching module and continuing to manually manage the same function, the motor pool succeeded only in creating redundancy. By foregoing the capability of tracking fuel consumption and preventive maintenance, the unit was left to manage other aspects of fleet management by manual means that have not worked well.

Daily use and inspection of vehicles is documented in accordance with 14 FAM 436.1 using a Daily Vehicle Use Record (OF-108), which must be maintained for all vehicles at the embassy. The inspection team examined a sampling of forms and found them generally complete, though most were missing the signature of the passenger. The motor pool supervisor, however, indicated problems accounting for the use of vehicles dedicated to offices such as the regional security office and the Marine security guard detachment, as operators of those vehicles do not use the OF-108 as required. In addition to being noncompliant with regulations, failure to use the form hinders monitoring and control of maintenance, fuel and oil consumption, and purpose of use (business versus other authorized use). It also hampers internal controls as the motor vehicle accountable officer is tasked by the same FAM citation to periodically review the forms for each vehicle.

Recommendation 12: Embassy San José should implement a plan that results in all vehicle operators using the Daily Vehicle Use Record (OF-108) in accordance with regulations. (Action: Embassy San José)

The embassy outsources vehicle maintenance to commercial firms. The LE staff supervisor could not explain or produce evidence of a defined or structured maintenance program other than a safety inspection that is required by local authorities. There appeared to be a means to record oil changes and tune ups after the fact, but no schedule that would facilitate planning and budgeting as required by 14 FAH-1 H-819. An effective preventive and scheduled maintenance program will forestall breakdowns, provide more dependable vehicles, and likely extend their useful lives.

Recommendation 13: Embassy San José should implement a scheduled vehicle preventive maintenance and inspection plan. (Action: Embassy San José)

The embassy operates a gasoline fuel pump for government-owned and personal vehicles. The pump is automated, requiring operators to have a device and personal identification number in order to operate it. The system records quantity pumped and attributes it to the user's device. The automated system obviates the need for a pump attendant but creates a degree of fraud risk. At the same time, the motor pool began only recently to generate Monthly Fuel/Oil Consumption Records (DS-1775) that track fuel consumption against odometer readings to determine miles per gallon, which could provide an indicator of whether fraud is occurring at the unattended pump. The motor pool manager does not conduct a monthly review of the reports as recommended by 14 FAH-1 H-814.2-2, which is a particularly important internal control measure absent a pump attendant.

Recommendation 14: Embassy San José should implement a plan for monthly review of the Monthly Fuel/Oil Consumption Records (DS-1775) as a means to detect mechanical problems or theft or misappropriation of fuel. (Action: Embassy San José)

Procurement

The procurement unit is proficient and coordinates well with the property management unit and the financial management section at necessary points along the supply chain management process. The Integrated Logistics Management System gives the unit visibility into receiving and voucher actions, which facilitates monitoring, delivery and eventual close-out of purchase orders. The unit maintains a reasonable number of formal contracts and maintains files in a neat and complete manner. The inspection team spot-checked 25 percent of the files and found them to contain the required Federal Acquisitions Regulation clause 52.222-50, Combating Trafficking in Persons. Examination of files did not produce evidence that the contracting officer's representatives had undergone the minimum of 40 hours of formal training that 14 FAH-2 H-113 c. requires. Failure to complete the training violates a U.S. Government-wide requirement that ensures representatives are prepared to manage the technical aspects of the contract.

Recommendation 15: Embassy San José should implement a plan to train contracting officer's representatives as required by regulation. (Action: Embassy San José)

Housing and Real Property

The embassy took appropriate steps to comply with the 2006 OIG recommendation that it bring its housing inventory into compliance with space standards. The inspection team noted that 6 of the total 68 employees listed on a Real Property Application report were overhoused by a factor of 10 percent or more. The inspection team spot-checked records for the top two, and found that the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations had granted waivers for the housing assignments.

The embassy's housing handbook does not contain a basic or supplemental list of furniture, furnishings, appliances, and equipment that the U.S. Government will provide to residences in accordance with 15 FAM 721. Such a list would provide customers with a clear understanding of what they should expect and inform their decisions about what to pack. Having a list would also facilitate the establishment of an interagency furniture pool in anticipation of future guidance from the Department and USAID Joint Management Board Implementing Committee.

Informal Recommendation 16: Embassy San José should establish a basic and, as appropriate, a supplemental list of furniture, furnishings, appliances, and equipment to be issued to U.S. Government-held residences.

Examination of lease files indicated that some documentation was missing or incomplete. Specifically, embassy regional security and occupational safety and health officer approvals, as required by 15 FAM 312.5 and 312.6, were not evident. Initial security inspection

recommendations were often in the files, but compliance and approval were not. The facilities maintenance section kept files on its inspections, but copies were not in the lease files.

Recommendation 16: Embassy San José should document security and safety inspections and approvals of residences. (Action: Embassy San José)

Customs, Shipping, and Travel

OIG survey results for the customs and shipping unit and the travel unit were slightly lower than the average for other embassies surveyed. These results appear largely attributable to delays in clearing shipments through customs and registering vehicles—both local bureaucratic impediments. The general services unit has worked for several years to cultivate good relationships with local officials and develop solutions that have cut processing time from about 6 months down to 3 weeks for household effects and other shipments. It also has arranged for temporary operating permits for vehicles that arrive with valid registration and license, thereby giving employees use of their vehicles pending completion of permanent registration. The embassy acknowledged the assistance of the Office of Foreign Missions as it has sought to resolve such issues that affect employee morale.

Facilities Management

A small in-house team augmented by contract services provides facilities maintenance support to the embassy. The U.S. direct-hire facilities specialist effectively supervises the program, which makes extensive use of the Department's Work Orders for Windows application to manage unscheduled and preventive maintenance. The unit also uses eServices and participates in the Collaborative Management Initiative metrics and analysis in its efforts to improve processes and performance. The unit is pursuing cost savings through energy conservation and is aware of disparities in energy consumption among residences with similar family sizes. What remains is to develop a program that uses the data to achieve results, which is addressed by an informal recommendation in the Financial Management section of this report.

Safety, Health, and Environmental Management

The Safety, Health, and Environmental Management program functions adequately. Accident reports are on file and include corrective action or steps to prevent recurrence. The embassy has named an LE staff member to be the assistant post occupational safety and health officer. This employee was scheduled to attend training in April 2012. Management attention to the safety program needs improvement. The Safety, Health, and Environmental Management committee met most recently in January 2012 but did not meet during 2011, despite the requirement prescribed in 15 FAM 933.2 to meet at least semiannually. The 2006 OIG report cited the same deficiency.

Recommendation 17: Embassy San José should conduct Safety, Health, and Environmental Management committee meetings at least semiannually. (Action: Embassy San José)

Information Management and Security

The information management (IM) program is well run and is successful in leveraging technology to streamline business processes within the various sections of the embassy. The program's internal SharePoint site was recognized as the best at the 2011 State Department SharePoint User's Conference. The site offers business solutions, such as an application that tracks U.S. assistance in Costa Rica and another application for tracking embassy representation funds. These are examples of the program's innovative effort to provide its customers efficient and cost-effective automated solutions.

The embassy's IM officer works collaboratively with the other embassy sections to provide excellent customer service. Including the IM officer, 4 U.S. direct-hire and 12 LE staff members efficiently handle the daily operations of the IM program. The program consists of two major operational components. The information systems center handles unclassified information processing services. The information program center is responsible for classified information processing, mail, pouch, radio, telephone, and switchboard services. IM services were rated highly in the OIG workplace and quality of life survey.

The inspectors reviewed the operational and security aspects of the program and found the program adheres to the Department's information resources management and security guidelines. However, the team found problems that need management attention in areas of staffing rationalization in the embassy communication center, delays in planning for embassy communication center renovation, and improper network cabling.

Information Program Center Staffing

The information program center is staffed with two direct-hire specialists. One IM specialist is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the classified information processing center. The second IM specialist assists with managing the center's operation. The center supports 68 computer users and 36 classified workstations. Because of the Department's effort to standardize and centralize the management of its information technology, the level of effort to manage classified information processing overseas is declining. Recognizing these changes, the Department is conducting a workforce survey to evaluate the overseas staffing structures.

Notwithstanding the workload associated with management of the embassy's radio, mail, pouch, telephone, and switchboard services, the information program center's daily operation does not require two full-time direct-hire IM specialists. The inspection team concluded from interviews with the staff and a review of their duties that elimination of the entry-level IM specialist position number 5141001, when the incumbent's tour is completed in 2013, will save an estimated \$567,000.

Further, the 2011 rightsizing review of the embassy projected one less IM staff member in 2016 than is currently in place. Eliminating one position will bring the staffing level in line with the rightsizing review.

Recommendation 18: Embassy San José, in coordination with the Bureau of Human Resources and the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, should eliminate the information management specialist position number 5141001. (Action: Embassy San José, in coordination with DGHR and WHA)

Post Communications Center Restoration

In December 2011, the fire suppression sprinkler system in the Post Communications Center (PCC) failed after the system was modified in conjunction with PCC renovation work, which cost approximately \$250,000. The incident occurred at the final stage of the renovation work, causing excessive water damage to the renovated workspace, including to the equipment, electrical wiring, drywall, ceiling, carpeting, and the fire alarm system.

The embassy staff is working with the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations to address the physical damage caused to the PCC, but as of the date of the inspection there is no project plan that defines stakeholders, scope of work, and funding sources for equipment replacement, or a renovation timeline. A documented plan will facilitate communication among stakeholders and define roles and responsibilities to complete the renovation in a timely manner. During this inspection, Embassy San José was still waiting for guidance from the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations on the next steps to restore the PCC.

Recommendation 19: The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, in coordination with Embassy San José and the Bureau of Information Resource Management, should develop a project plan for the renovation of the post communications center, including replacement of the fire protection system. (Action: OBO, in coordination with Embassy San José and IRM)

Network Distribution Room Cabling

The network cables in the chancery second- and third-floor network distribution rooms, which support the embassy's classified and unclassified networks, are not organized and labeled in accordance with 5 FAH-9 H-382 and FAH-9 H-383. A mixture of outdated and new network connectors is used and the cluttered cables make network switch management difficult. In 2008 the Bureau of Information Resource Management upgraded the cabling infrastructure work based on a survey done by the embassy. However, the work performed did not fully address all the cabling deficiencies in these rooms. The current condition of the cables makes it difficult to trace cables and resolve network problems.

Recommendation 20: Embassy San José should organize and appropriately label cabling in the network distribution rooms. (Action: Embassy San José)

Management Controls

Management controls at the embassy are strong, with minor exceptions. The Ambassador has designated the management officer to be the management controls coordinator. The July 2011 annual chief of mission management controls statement of assurance report revealed no internal control weaknesses that warranted reporting to Washington. The embassy uses the OIG questionnaires to conduct periodic risk assessments to improve internal controls, and in fact, used them to prepare the last statement of assurance.

Consular Management Controls

The inspection team noted that the consul general and consular managers had made many improvements to consular management controls since their arrival in summer 2011. Accountable consular officers and alternates, as well as consular subcashiers and alternates, were properly trained and designated in writing. Controlled supplies were correctly stored and transfers of accountability were up-to-date. The consul general has a line of sight into the separate cashier booth. There were no discrepancies in the collections. The accountable consular officer for cash was keeping the required daily records at the time of the inspection. He was also conducting the required periodic reconciliations of machine readable visa fees against nonimmigrant visa applications.

The inspection team found that the subcashier was routinely depositing consular fees with the Class B cashier the morning after collection. Under the provisions of 7 FAH-1 H-771.2-5, the accountable consular officer must ensure that the consular fees are delivered and receipted prior to the end of the Class B cashier's business day.

Recommendation 21: Embassy San José should implement standard operating procedures for depositing its consular fees with the Class B cashier and preparing receipts for the fees on the day of collection. (Action: Embassy San José)

The consul general brought to the attention of the inspection team several incidents of visa lookout accountability anomalies that she had identified, including failure to take required fingerprints and inappropriate dismissal of a category one hit. The consul general took appropriate action and counseled the responsible officers, emphasizing the importance of correct procedures. The inspection team reviewed with the consul general and the visa chief the requirement to report visa lookout accountability violations.

Quality of Life

Morale at the embassy is mixed, but scores on the workplace and quality of life questionnaires indicate that overall morale falls below the average for approximately 50 prior inspections. On a scale of 1 to 5, the overall average for community morale was 3.18. Reasons for this score vary and include traffic safety, crime, and the high cost of living. However, it appears that one consistent basis for low morale is employees' unrealistic expectations about living in Costa Rica.

Community Liaison Office

The community liaison office is staffed by a coordinator who works 32 hours per week, and an assistant who works 16 hours per week. The latter position had just been vacated at the time of the inspection, and several candidates had expressed interest. The coordinator had sought approval from the ICASS council for additional hours for a new assistant, but this request was denied for budgetary reasons. The coordinator completed formal training in March 2012.

The community liaison office coordinator listed sponsorship, family member employment, and events planning as priorities. The embassy has a sponsorship policy dating from 2008. It is not clear that this helpful information is widely available to bidders, newcomers, or potential sponsors.

Informal Recommendation 17: Embassy San José should update its sponsorship policy and post it on the embassy's internal SharePoint site.

The United States has a reciprocal agreement with Costa Rica allowing for eligible family members to work in the local job market. A global employment advisor under contract with the Family Liaison Office had recently visited the embassy and conducted resumé and interview training. The embassy has a good record of eligible family member employment. The coordinator is aware of six people seeking jobs, two of whom will arrive in the summer transfer cycle.

Information about community liaison office activities is available on the embassy's internal SharePoint. High-quality information for newcomers dates from 2009 and could be updated as needed before the summer transfer cycle to help newcomers plan for their tours of duty.

Informal Recommendation 18: Embassy San José should update its information for newcomers on its internal SharePoint site.

The coordinator has sponsored successful large events that include the LE staff. Some community members reported they do not attend many of the smaller events, saying they are mostly aimed at families with children. The coordinator is addressing the need to arrange events that appeal to various demographic groups.

Health Unit

The health unit is staffed with a locally hired Foreign Service health practitioner and an administrative assistant. The embassy recently hired an eligible family member nurse to cover gaps when the health practitioner is on leave or in training. The embassy also employs, via contract, two local doctors who spend a total of 10 hours a week in the health unit as liaisons between the LE staff and the local health system.

Regional support for San José is timely and sufficient. The health unit is well appointed and well equipped, except for an electrocardiogram machine that is over 20 years old.

Informal Recommendation 19: Embassy San José should replace its electrocardiogram machine.

Employee Association

During the inspection, Embassy San José was in the process of shutting down its employee association, known locally as the United States Cooperative Exchange. Initially, the association sought to remain operational, but to scale down its operation to avoid various reporting requirements that it deemed onerous. The Office of Commissary and Recreation Affairs, however, did not grant the requested relief, so the association decided to cease operations altogether. During the inspection, the association board was completing the liquidation checklist provided by Washington, having already sold its inventory. Remaining tasks include a final audit of the association. The embassy also plans to contribute some funds to the community liaison office and remit the remainder to the Office of Commissary and Recreation Affairs.

Overseas Schools

Parents are satisfied with school choices from among six options; two are Department-supported schools. (b)(5)(b)(6)

(b)(5)(b)(6) its popularity may dwindle after a planned future move when commutes for children will be longer. Embassy representatives sit on the boards of three schools, (b)(5)(b)(6)

List of Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Embassy San José should maintain an official file of law enforcement working group meeting minutes with the appropriate traffic analysis and geographic terms. (Action: Embassy San José)

Recommendation 2: Embassy San José, in coordination with the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Science Affairs, should manage the workload of the environment, science, technology, and health affairs hub officer and staff to reflect regional priorities. (Action: Embassy San José, in coordination with OES)

Recommendation 3: Embassy San José should require its environment, science, technology, and health affairs hub officer to complete all appropriate grants officer courses and obtain a grants warrant. (Action: Embassy San José)

Recommendation 4: Embassy San José, in coordination with the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor Affairs, should issue an annual management notice explaining the scope of Leahy vetting and implement standard operating procedures. (Action: Embassy San José, in coordination with DRL)

Recommendation 5: Embassy San José, in coordination with the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, should designate primary and secondary coordinators for the Leahy vetting program and should provide the training and authorization to use the International Vetting and Security Tracking system. (Action: Embassy San José, in coordination with DRL)

Recommendation 6: Embassy San José should archive or destroy all files dating from before 2002 that are held by the political/economic section. (Action: Embassy San José)

Recommendation 7: Embassy San José should implement a system for employee compliance with guidance on using the State Messaging and Archive Retrieval Toolset system to archive email and other correspondence. (Action: Embassy San José)

Recommendation 8: Embassy San José should implement a system to verify maintenance and archiving of files by the environment, science, technology, and health hub office. (Action: Embassy San José)

Recommendation 9: Embassy San José should process all travel vouchers through the Post Support Unit and implement a plan to outsource other categories of vouchers to the Post Support Unit. (Action: Embassy San José)

Recommendation 10: Embassy San José should implement a plan to rightsize staffing in its financial management unit based on workload analysis, outsourcing of voucher processing, and comparable staffing at similarly sized embassies. (Action: Embassy San José)

Recommendation 11: Embassy San José should comply with all the Property Disposal Authorization and Survey Report (DS-132) requirements, including investigation of inventory shortages found during the annual inventory process and survey board referral, if appropriate. (Action: Embassy San José)

Recommendation 12: Embassy San José should implement a plan that results in all vehicle operators using the Daily Vehicle Use Record (OF-108) in accordance with regulations. (Action: Embassy San José)

Recommendation 13: Embassy San José should implement a scheduled vehicle preventive maintenance and inspection plan. (Action: Embassy San José)

Recommendation 14: Embassy San José should implement a plan for monthly review of the Monthly Fuel/Oil Consumption Records (DS-1775) as a means to detect mechanical problems or theft or misappropriation of fuel. (Action: Embassy San José)

Recommendation 15: Embassy San José should implement a plan to train contracting officer's representatives as required by regulation. (Action: Embassy San José)

Recommendation 16: Embassy San José should document security and safety inspections and approvals of residences. (Action: Embassy San José)

Recommendation 17: Embassy San José should conduct Safety, Health, and Environmental Management committee meetings at least semiannually. (Action: Embassy San José)

Recommendation 18: Embassy San José, in coordination with the Bureau of Human Resources and the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, should eliminate the information management specialist position number 5141001. (Action: Embassy San José, in coordination with DGHR and WHA)

Recommendation 19: The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, in coordination with Embassy San José and the Bureau of Information Resource Management, should develop a project plan for the renovation of the post communications center, including replacement of the fire protection system. (Action: OBO, in coordination with Embassy San José and IRM)

Recommendation 20: Embassy San José should organize and appropriately label cabling in the network distribution rooms. (Action: Embassy San José)

Recommendation 21: Embassy San José should implement standard operating procedures for depositing its consular fees with the Class B cashier and preparing receipts for the fees on the day of collection. (Action: Embassy San José)

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 San José should reduce the number of ambassadorial events and speeches that require extensive preparatory work and consume excessive embassy resources.

Informal Recommendation 2: Embassy San José should make greater use of technology in preparing, submitting, and editing material for the executive office.

Informal Recommendation 3: Embassy San José should designate a qualified locally employed staff member to translate the Ambassador's speeches and remarks.

Informal Recommendation 4: Embassy San José should increase the analytic content of reporting.

Informal Recommendation 5: Embassy San José should enter its unclassified biographic information on the Diplopedia OpenNet system and update the leadership profiles on the Intellipedia classified system.

Informal Recommendation 6: Embassy San José should include biographic reporting and leadership analysis responsibilities in the work requirements statements of all officers who do significant amounts of contact work.

Informal Recommendation 7: Embassy San José should carefully analyze and monitor both social media activity and more traditional approaches to reaching key opinion leaders so that the embassy effectively and consistently reaches critical audiences.

Informal Recommendation 8: Embassy San José should develop an American speakers program to give embassy officials, including entry-level officers, an opportunity to speak at appropriate venues across Costa Rica.

Informal Recommendation 9: Embassy San José should convene regularly scheduled staff meetings, including all locally employed staff, in its public diplomacy section.

Informal Recommendation 10: Embassy San José should arrange for at least one additional public diplomacy officer to complete the required grants training and obtain valid grants authority before the current public affairs officer departs post.

Informal Recommendation 11: Embassy San José should conduct visa adjudication reviews on a daily basis.

Informal Recommendation 12: Embassy San José should expand its utility cost monitoring to provide all employees information concerning their monthly utility usage and offer helpful tips to employees regarding ways to conserve energy and reduce costs.

Informal Recommendation 13: Embassy San José should implement a standard operating procedure to instruct vendors to correlate the items they ship with purchase order numbers.

Informal Recommendation 14: Embassy San José should implement a plan to follow up on the status of ordered items that are not received as part of its supply chain management process.

Informal Recommendation 15: Embassy San José should implement a plan to centralize receiving to the extent feasible at its warehouse facility.

Informal Recommendation 16: Embassy San José should establish a basic and, as appropriate, a supplemental list of furniture, furnishings, appliances, and equipment to be issued to U.S. Government-held residences.

Informal Recommendation 17: Embassy San José should update its sponsorship policy and post it on the embassy's internal SharePoint site.

Informal Recommendation 18: Embassy San José should update its information for newcomers on its internal SharePoint site.

Informal Recommendation 19: Embassy San José should replace its electrocardiogram machine.

Principal Officials

	Name	Arrival Date
Ambassador	<i>Anne Slaughter Andrew</i>	<i>12/09</i>
Deputy Chief of Mission	<i>Eric G. Nelson</i>	<i>8/10</i>
Chiefs of Sections:		
Consular	<i>Robin L. Haase</i>	<i>7/11</i>
Political/Economic	<i>Julie Schechter Torres</i>	<i>8/09</i>
Management	<i>Leo Voytko</i>	<i>12/10</i>
Public Affairs	<i>Mark Tauber</i>	<i>9/09</i>
Environmental Affairs	<i>Alain Norman</i>	<i>7/11</i>
Regional Security	<i>Patrick Mitchell</i>	<i>8/11</i>
Other Agencies:		
Agricultural Counselor	<i>Kevin N. Smith</i>	<i>9/08</i>
Senior Commercial Officer	<i>William B. Smith</i>	<i>7/08</i>
Senior Defense		
Representative	<i>Troy J. Vest, CDR, USCG</i>	<i>6/10</i>
Drug Enforcement		
Administration Attaché	<i>Charles P. Springer</i>	<i>7/09</i>
U.S. Agency for International		
Development – Office of		<i>10/01</i>
Foreign Disaster Assistance	<i>Tim Callaghan</i>	
Peace Corps	<i>Steven Dorsey</i>	<i>7/09</i>
APHIS Officer in Charge	<i>Eric Hoffman</i>	<i>7/08</i>
HHS/FDA	<i>Michael Rogers</i>	<i>12/11</i>

Abbreviations

DCM	Deputy chief of mission
Department	U.S. Department of State
ESTH	Environment, science, technology, and health
FAH	Foreign Affairs Handbook
FAM	Foreign Affairs Manual
ICASS	International Cooperative Administrative and Support Services
IM	Information management
IRM	Bureau of Information Resource Management
LE	Locally employed
MSRP	Mission Strategic and Resource Plan
OIG	Office of Inspector General
PCC	Post Communications Center
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development

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