



OIG HIGHLIGHTS

June 2015
OFFICE OF INSPECTIONS
Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs

Inspection of Embassy Tallinn, Estonia

What OIG Found

- The Ambassador and the deputy chief of mission provide appropriate oversight to the country team, and U.S. Department of State sections, in accordance with Section 207(a) of the Foreign Service Act of 1980. However, stronger leadership from the Ambassador and his greater adherence to Department rules and regulations are necessary.
- The political/economic section is staffed adequately to carry out its policy advocacy and reporting responsibilities but needs to adjust local staff portfolios and the language requirements of its U.S. officers to maximize resources.
- The public affairs section is central to mission efforts to carry out Integrated Country Strategy objectives, using traditional public diplomacy tools, media engagement, social media, and regional outreach to amplify policy messages.
- The embassy's consular warden system has not been reviewed, activated, or tested since at least 2011. Worldwide tensions increase the need for an effective warden system with the flexibility to meet multiple contingencies, including the potential interruption of electronic messaging capability.
- The aging chancery does not meet—and cannot be retrofitted to meet—even the most basic security standards, and numerous infrastructure deficiencies need to be addressed if the embassy is to remain at its present location.
- The telecommunications and power cabling infrastructure throughout the chancery is disorganized and largely undocumented, which limits the ability of information management staff to carry out their duties.
- The embassy needs a comprehensive training plan for locally employed staff that reflects priority training needs.
- Internal management controls need to be strengthened, with particular attention to separation of duties, documenting processes and standard operating procedures, clarifying backup duties, and reassessing organization structure.

View Report: [ISP-I-15-23A](#).

What OIG Inspected

OIG inspected the U.S. Embassy in Tallinn during October 3–22, 2014.

What OIG Recommended

OIG made 35 recommendations to U.S. Embassy Tallinn and Department bureaus intended to improve embassy operations and program implementation. Most addressed management support operations, infrastructure, and staffing.

OIG made recommendations to strengthen internal management controls by attending to separation of duties, documenting processes, establishing standard operating procedures, clarifying backup duties, and reassessing organization structure.

Recommendations to address infrastructure deficiencies in the chancery included those pertaining to basic security standards, telecommunications and power cabling, and the design and construction of embassy mail facilities.

OIG also made recommendations to address staffing, training, and language needs by establishing a comprehensive training plan for locally employed staff; providing training in the areas of leadership, team building, and Equal Employment Opportunity; and adjusting the language requirements for U.S. officers in the political/economic section to meet reporting needs and maximize resources.

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ISP-I-15-23A

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EUROPEAN AND EURASIAN AFFAIRS

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CONTENTS

KEY FINDINGS.....	1
CONTEXT.....	2
LEADERSHIP.....	3
Strategic Direction and Coordination.....	3
Leadership and Management.....	3
Morale and Workplace Issues.....	5
POLICY AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION.....	5
Political/Economic Section.....	5
Public Diplomacy.....	8
Consular Management.....	10
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT.....	12
Management Overview.....	13
Facilities and Real Property.....	13
Human Resources.....	15
Financial Management.....	16
General Services.....	17
Information Management.....	20
Security.....	23
MISSION SUPPORT SERVICES.....	23
Community Liaison Office.....	23
Health Unit.....	24
International Schools.....	24
MANAGEMENT CONTROLS.....	25
Expendable Supply Management Deficiencies.....	25
RECOMMENDATIONS.....	26
PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS.....	29
APPENDIX A: SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY.....	30

Purpose and Scope	30
Methodology.....	30
ABBREVIATIONS.....	31
INSPECTION TEAM MEMBERS.....	32

KEY FINDINGS

- The Ambassador and the deputy chief of mission provide appropriate oversight to the country team, and U.S. Department of State sections, in accordance with Section 207(a) of the Foreign Service Act of 1980. However, stronger leadership from the Ambassador and his greater adherence to Department of State rules and regulations are necessary.
- The political/economic section is staffed adequately to carry out its policy advocacy and reporting responsibilities but needs to adjust local staff portfolios and the language requirements of its U.S. officers to maximize resources.
- The public affairs section is central to mission efforts to carry out Integrated Country Strategy objectives, using traditional public diplomacy tools, media engagement, social media, and regional outreach to amplify policy messages.
- The embassy's consular warden system has not been reviewed, activated, or tested since at least 2011. Worldwide tensions increase the need for an effective warden system with the flexibility to meet multiple contingencies, including the potential interruption of electronic messaging capability.
- The aging chancery does not meet—and cannot be retrofitted to meet—even the most basic security standards, and numerous infrastructure deficiencies need to be addressed if the embassy is to remain at its present location.
- The telecommunications and power cabling infrastructure throughout the chancery is disorganized and largely undocumented, which limits the ability of information management staff to carry out their duties.
- The embassy needs a comprehensive training plan for locally employed staff that reflects priority training needs.
- Internal management controls need to be strengthened, with particular attention to separation of duties, documenting processes and standard operating procedures, clarifying backup duties, and reassessing organization structure.

CONTEXT

The Republic of Estonia has been a member state of the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) since 2004. Estonia has established itself as a regional leader in technological innovation, promarket reform and fiscal policy, cyber-defense, and international security cooperation. Estonia hosts a NATO-accredited Cooperative Cyber-Defense Center of Excellence in Tallinn, and it has provided troops for several international military peacekeeping and training missions worldwide. Estonia began hosting U.S. troops in 2014 as part of Operation Atlantic Resolve to deter Russian aggression in the region. Estonia's own relationship with neighboring Russia is contentious, and its unratified border with Russia remains a point of dispute for both countries. Within its own borders, Estonia is home to a significant ethnic Russian minority (approximately 25 percent of the total population).

The United States has a history of support for Estonia and its sovereignty, dating to 1922 when diplomatic relations were first established. The United States closed Embassy Tallinn at the time of the Soviet invasion of the Baltic States in 1940 and did not recognize the subsequent Soviet annexation of Estonia. Upon Estonia's declaration of full independence in September 1991, the United States reestablished diplomatic relations.

Embassy Tallinn's policies and programs focus on collaborative efforts to strengthen the bilateral relationship in the areas of international security, public diplomacy, and commerce. The recent Russian aggression in Ukraine has increased the mission's operational tempo and brought Estonia into the American policy spotlight. The inspection team examined a number of issues related to the Ukraine crisis, including how well Embassy Tallinn is reaching out to the country's Estonian and Russian communities, efforts to support U.S. troop presence in the country, and whether embassy staff have sufficient Russian- and Estonian-language skills.

The chancery's aging and ailing infrastructure is the mission's most significant management challenge. In 1992, Embassy Tallinn reoccupied its pre-Soviet facility, a six-story, former apartment building in the heart of Tallinn, constructed in 1920. The facility was renovated in 1993. The U.S. Department of State (Department) intended to inhabit the building for 5 to 10 years; however, 22 years later the embassy is housed in the same building. In 2010, the Department leased commercial office space for a regional U.S. Secret Service office.

In addition to its infrastructure, curtailments and staffing gaps among the American staff have proved challenging for a mission experiencing increases in both visibility from Washington and workload corresponding to regional events and a series of high-profile visits from senior U.S. officials throughout 2014.

Missionwide staffing is 42 U.S. direct-hire employees, including 27 Department U.S. direct-hire employees. The FY 2014 missionwide budget was \$8.9 million. Other agencies represented at the mission include elements of the U.S. Departments of Defense, Justice, and Homeland Security. A small number of U.S. military personnel on rotation to Estonia fall under chief of mission authority. The mission has no consulates. The mission's FY 2015 request for foreign assistance funds totaled \$3.6 million for Estonian military stabilization operations and security sector reform (\$2.4 million for foreign military funding and \$1.2 million for international military education and training). Embassy Tallinn's missionwide budget for FY 2014 was approximately

\$8.9 million. Department staffing was 27 U.S. direct-hire employees and 85 locally employed (LE) staff members.

LEADERSHIP

Embassy Tallinn enjoys a pro-American environment in Estonia and maintains productive relations with the Estonian Government and people. The embassy is focused largely on security issues that, since the onset of Russian aggression in Ukraine, have been reframed to center on NATO and regional efforts. The Ambassador and the deputy chief of mission (DCM) provide appropriate oversight to the country team and Department sections. Agency heads and section chiefs uniformly reported having easy access to the front office. The most significant findings concern the need for stronger leadership from the Ambassador and his greater adherence to ethics principles, Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) guidelines, and security policies.

Strategic Direction and Coordination

The Ambassador's efforts to establish an overall strategic vision, in accordance with 3 *Foreign Affairs Manual* (FAM) 1214, have not been successful. Few of Embassy Tallinn's senior leaders can articulate the Ambassador's overall strategic vision or identify the top priorities contained therein, despite an off-site planning session held just days before the start of the inspection. The Ambassador held the previous planning off site almost 2 years earlier—too long ago to enable employees to have a lasting awareness of his goals and direction. A clear shared vision—key to coordinated team work and productivity—is missing. Greater communication is needed. No structured effort exists to inform the mission employees, including LE staff members, of the outcome of the planning session, which has left a large part of the embassy team uninformed.

Recommendation 1: Embassy Tallinn should implement a planning effort that reinforces knowledge of and adherence to mission goals and that includes annual planning sessions and quarterly reviews. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Recommendation 2: Embassy Tallinn should inform all embassy staff, including locally employed staff, of the unclassified outcome of the planning sessions and reviews. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Leadership and Management

The Ambassador's interpersonal skills have enabled him to participate effectively in public affairs and other programming in several parts of the country and have garnered him personal popularity with the Estonian public. He has used those skills to establish genial relationships within military circles, both U.S. and Estonian. The Ambassador's support for and participation in military programs are not only lauded by the military elements of the mission and visiting U.S. commanders but are also reported favorably in the local press. His support for the military includes advocacy for U.S. military sales. His efforts have helped secure a sale to the Estonian Government of U.S. Javelin missiles worth \$50–\$60 million.

Relations with the Estonian Government

The Ambassador, however, has not established strong relationships at the Government of Estonia's ministerial level. In his 2 years as Chief of Mission, he has met infrequently with the Prime Minister or other ministers in the cabinet (less than 12 times during his 24 months in the embassy, in addition to initial courtesy calls or accompanying visitors and at public events). Regular meetings would strengthen his presence within the most senior Estonian Government circles and would enable him to obtain nuanced information and make contributions to reporting cables. He agreed to establish a schedule of meetings and to increase the amount of his own reporting when meetings occur.

Despite the infrequency of his meetings with senior Estonian Government officials, the Ambassador successfully led the effort to obtain the government's acceptance of a Guantanamo detainee—an impressive achievement given the small size of the country and the government's reluctance. The original effort, begun in 2007, was advanced by two previous chiefs of mission, but it stalled in 2009. The Ambassador reinvigorated the effort after returning from the global chief of mission conference in March 2014. The Government of Estonia announced its decision to accept a detainee in October 2014.

Advocacy for U.S. Business

The Ambassador also supports Estonia's strong technology sector and innovative business environment. He led an Estonian delegation of entrepreneurs to the United States in June 2014, to explore trade and investment opportunities that could result in U.S. job creation. The program resulted in raised awareness about the nuts and bolts of investing in the United States. However, the Ambassador has been involved only marginally in efforts that would identify potential opportunities in Estonia for U.S. businesses, as outlined in 18 FAM 015. He agreed to increase efforts in that area, as well as not to pursue Estonian export interests that would not directly result in U.S. jobs.

Relations within the Mission

As measured by Office of Inspector General (OIG)-administered questionnaires and corroborated by OIG interviews, the embassy staff rated the Ambassador below average in leadership categories, including vision, engagement, fairness, and ethics. Segments of the mission community, including some U.S. direct-hire and LE female employees told the OIG team that they feel undervalued. The Ambassador admitted that he made remarks on more than one occasion about the need to establish gender balance in the mission; his words have led some employees to believe that he values male employees more and wants male applicants selected for future vacancies. Some American and LE staff members gave examples of preferential treatment that the Ambassador afforded to specific employees and interns. It is imperative that the Ambassador reverse these perceptions; he indicated that he is willing to work hard to do so, and he began the process by apologizing to his staff before the inspection team's departure. The chief of mission, per 2 FAM 113 and 3 *Foreign Affairs Handbook* (FAH)-2H, has full responsibility for the direction, coordination, and supervision of all U.S. Government employees in the mission.

Recommendation 3: Embassy Tallinn should arrange for leadership and team-building training for the Ambassador and country team. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

The OIG team identified instances in which the Ambassador did not appear to adhere to established Department rules and regulations. Each instance was small, but collectively they suggest his disregard for adherence to the rules. Guidance in 3 FAM 1214 b. (1) outlines leadership principles for Department employees and specifies that managers should model integrity by holding themselves and others to the highest standards of conduct, performance, and ethics.

Recommendation 4: The Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, in coordination with the Office of the Legal Adviser, should counsel the Embassy Tallinn Ambassador concerning ways to avoid breaches of Department of State rules and regulations. (Action: EUR)

Deputy Chief of Mission

The DCM had overlapped at the mission with the Ambassador for 14 months at the time of the inspection. She and the Ambassador have a cordial professional relationship. She is an able leader and manager; in OIG questionnaires and personal interviews, the mission staff rated her at or above benchmarks in all leadership categories. The DCM's primary focus is internal leadership and management, but she has developed a network in the host government that enables her to perform effectively as charge' d'affaires. The staff respects her for her problem-solving abilities, intellect, and keen grasp of issues.

An area that requires more attention from the DCM is mentoring. At the start of the inspection no program was in place for mentoring the mission's two first- and second-tour (FAST) employees, and some mid-level officers stated that they would welcome mentoring on career development issues. The DCM structured a FAST program and scheduled initial mentoring sessions prior to the inspection team's departure.

Morale and Workplace Issues

Morale, as measured by OIG questionnaires and employee interviews, is within the average range of the 20 embassies most recently inspected by OIG. Areas of concern to embassy employees include the chancery's maintenance, safety, and security (which are topics of ongoing discussion with Department bureaus), and information technology. The security and curriculum quality of the two schools attended by the children of mission employees is another area of concern. The DCM is a member of the board of the Department-supported school, and she and the Ambassador agreed to give greater attention to the other school in the future.

POLICY AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Political/Economic Section

The combined political/economic section follows political, political-military, and economic developments and evaluates their potential impact on U.S.-Estonian cooperation on shared regional and global interests. The section also works to strengthen economic ties between the

United States and Estonia, including through increased U.S. access to the Estonian market. Estonia is a Fast Track country for Leahy vetting (i.e., additional vetting in Washington is not required).

Locally Employed Staff Position Descriptions Outdated

Since the outbreak of tensions between Ukraine and Russia, the section's operational responsibilities and reporting priorities have changed. The August 2014 arrival of the political officer following a year-long gap in that position should enable the section to devote better attention to political-military issues that have increased in importance following recent geopolitical developments in the region. However, none of the four LE staff portfolios includes high-priority topics, such as political-military issues, cyber security, and e-governance. Per 3 FAM 7513.1, incorporating these issues into the position descriptions of LE staff members will enable the section to maximize use of its resources and ensure that all employees are working to support mission goals and the objectives of the Integrated Country Strategy.

Recommendation 5: Embassy Tallinn should update the position descriptions of the locally employed staff in the political/economic section. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Language Training Does Not Match Section Requirements

The section chief, political officer, and economic-commercial officer positions are all Estonian-language designated at the level of general working proficiency ("3/3" in speaking/reading per the Foreign Service Institute's rating scale). The political and economic-commercial officers received Estonian language training prior to their arrival at the embassy, as did the previous section chief. The current section chief did not but came to Tallinn in summer 2014 with Russian-language skills acquired for an assignment elsewhere. Requiring all three officers to have Estonian-language skills is of limited use, given the high level of English proficiency throughout Estonia. The section chief position should continue to require Estonian-language skills because of the chief's contact work with senior Estonian officials and oversight responsibility for section operations. However, almost all the economic-commercial officer's contacts are internationally oriented and speak English well. Furthermore, Russian-language skills would be more appropriate for the political officer, especially when doing outreach to Estonia's Russian-speaking community, where fewer fluent English speakers are present.

Recommendation 6: Embassy Tallinn, in coordination with the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs and the Bureau of Human Resources, should eliminate the Estonian-language requirement for the economic-commercial officer position in the next triennial review of the Department of State's language-designated positions. (Action: Embassy Tallinn, in coordination with EUR and DGHR)

Recommendation 7: Embassy Tallinn, in coordination with the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs and the Bureau of Human Resources, should change the Estonian-language proficiency requirement for the political officer position to 3/3 Russian capability in the next triennial review. (Action: Embassy Tallinn, in coordination with EUR and DGHR)

Insufficient Reporting and Contact Work

The political/economic section drafted 190 cables during the January–September 2014 period. Of the approximately 115 cables that the OIG team reviewed, around 40 percent were related to the delivery of démarches to Estonian Government ministries. Section staff point out that the high percentage of démarche-related cables reflects the wide range of regional and global issues on which the United States works with Estonia, especially as NATO allies and development assistance partners in third countries on e-governance and other issues. However, the frequent Washington taskings and lack of full staffing for long periods affect the section’s ability to produce regularly well-sourced, substantive reporting cables, especially on political developments. The quantity of economic-commercial reporting was not large either but included topics of interest to Washington, such as the impact of regional developments on the Estonian economy and Estonia’s innovative technology sector.

The OIG team reviewed the political/economic section’s newly completed FY 2015 substantive and analytical reporting plan with the section chief and suggested changes to help section employees adhere to the plan amidst competing demands on their time. The team also advised the section chief on the need to mentor staff on the relevance of contact work for reporting. Lastly, the team noted Washington’s interest in more biographic reporting, especially given the growing cooperation between the United States and Estonia in multiple fora. The section chief agreed to encourage his staff to update and load biographic information for important Estonian contacts into the Department’s Diplopedia Web page.

Active Export Promotion

Along with the Ambassador, the section staff has carried out commercial advocacy on behalf of U.S. firms. In addition, the Ambassador and his team used a Business Facilitation Incentive Fund grant from the Department’s Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs to accompany an Estonian technology delegation on its trip to the United States to explore potential investment opportunities and collaborative public partnership efforts. Embassy Tallinn is a Department partner post with the U.S. Foreign Commercial Service in Helsinki and works closely with the U.S. Foreign Commercial Service in Stockholm as well. The economic-commercial staff also coordinates with the Defense attaché office in Tallinn to support U.S. defense technology-related companies interested in the Estonian market.

Leahy Procedural Guide in Process

Estonia is a Fast Track country for Leahy vetting. The Leahy amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 prohibits foreign assistance to security forces where evidence is credible that they have committed gross human rights violations. The Leahy vetting process determines whether such evidence exists. The new political officer serves as the Leahy vetting coordinator and has completed training on how to use the International Vetting and Security Tracking system. She is drafting a guidebook on vetting operating procedures for mission personnel. The embassy plans to designate an incoming political/economic eligible family member administrative assistant as the backup coordinator.

Public Diplomacy

Public Affairs Section Is Integral to Mission Objectives

The public affairs section is central to mission efforts to carry out Integrated Country Strategy objectives, using traditional public diplomacy tools, media engagement, social media, and regional outreach to amplify policy messages. Section staff collaborates with the front office, the political/economic section, and the Defense attaché office to plan public events and maximize impact. Coordination with the front office and other sections is close, including daily meetings, press briefings, and regular working groups. The public affairs section prepares the annual public diplomacy implementation plan and presents it to the mission public affairs working group for input. Mission events are mapped out on a strategic planning calendar that the public affairs officer introduced, modeled on the best practice cited in OIG's inspection report on Embassy Budapest (ISP-I-14-03A, February 2014).

Social Media Is an Essential Element of All Mission Public Programs

The section employs Facebook and Twitter to build expectations and generate audiences in advance for all public events and posts photos with text immediately after events are completed. Policy messages are sent by Twitter to Estonian Government officials, opinion leaders, and media. An outstanding example of a coordinated social media campaign in support of U.S. policy was the buildup and coverage of President Obama's September 2014 visit. Facebook analytic tools indicate that the visit coverage generated a significant spike in embassy Facebook page engagement with Estonian target audiences. The embassy Facebook page featured the U.S. Army First Cavalry Division's arrival, part of NATO troop rotations in Estonia. Social media can reach a large audience in a short time. When a U.S. military officer attached to the mission stopped on the street to help a woman change a flat tire, a passerby caught the incident on camera and sent the story with photos to the public affairs section for inclusion on the embassy Facebook page. The next day, 20,000 views and 800 "likes" were registered, a record for Embassy Tallinn, and projected a positive image of the U.S. military.

Insufficient Locally Employed Staff Time for Social Media

The current LE social media coordinator's job is split among social media, outreach, and administrative responsibilities (e.g., procurement, logistics, and financial reporting). If this employee could devote more time to social media, he could further integrate mission efforts to reach target audiences, conduct more analytics on audience impact, and help devise more interactive tools for social media. This employee is also the only native Russian speaker in the section and is responsible for Russian-language outreach. One solution would be to hire a part-time employee, either an LE staff member or eligible family member, to perform administrative duties. The Department's September 2014 Rightsizing Report concurs with Embassy Tallinn's Mission Resource Request for this additional LE staff position.

Recommendation 8: Embassy Tallinn should hire a locally employed staff member or eligible family member on a part-time basis to carry out administrative duties in the public affairs section. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Public Affairs Amplifies Official Visits and Speakers through Media Engagement

Adding to the impact of official visitors, such as the attendance of the Department's Coordinator for Cyber Issues at the Nordic/Baltic Cyber Security Conference (October 2014), the public affairs section arranged interviews with Estonian Public TV and Radio to underscore the Integrated Country Strategy objective of cooperation in countering cyber threats. Although the political/economic section has the lead on cooperation with Estonia's technology sector, the public affairs section multiplies the message with media coverage. For example, an executive from a Silicon Valley technology company visited Tallinn for an Estonian tech start-up networking event, at which the Ambassador gave a presentation. The public affairs section arranged for the tech executive to speak on her Silicon Valley experience at Tallinn Technical University and reinforced the impact with an interview with a leading Estonian tech media outlet.

Media Reporting Not Sufficiently Focused

The public affairs section prepares daily oral media briefs, followed by a written summary sent to all mission sections as well as to Department and U.S. military subscribers. Although the embassy staff appreciates the briefs and Washington audiences praised the summaries, preparing these reports consumes a large portion of staff time. The public affairs officer would like to concentrate reporting on issues tied to mission priorities, saving time and effort. The OIG team concurs with this proposal.

Public Affairs Section Coordinates Mission Outreach

The mission's Regional Outreach Program enlists all U.S. interested direct-hire employees and pairs them with LE staff members to travel to 1 of the 14 counties of Estonia for speaking engagements, school visits, and/or meetings with local officials on a semiannual basis. Even though the program aims to establish and maintain relationships with important local contacts and to present a positive image of the United States, the public affairs officer plans to make it more targeted and systematic, focusing more on certain regions connected to policy issues and providing talking points with a consistent message. Expanded embassy presence is needed in Russian-speaking areas to build trust among a skeptical population who are subject to a steady stream of propaganda from media originating in Russia.

The public affairs section needs more Russian-language capability now that communication with the Russian-speaking community has become a policy priority. The section has one LE staffer who is a native Russian speaker and several other LE staff members with Russian-language fluency. However, outreach would be more effective from an American officer who could conduct conversations, give short presentations, and so forth, in Russian, thereby building trust with Russian-speaking audiences. Ideally, the assistant public affairs officer would have a working proficiency ("3/3" in speaking/reading) Russian capability, and the public affairs officer position would remain Estonian-language designated.

Recommendation 9: Embassy Tallinn, in coordination with the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs and the Bureau of Human Resources, should designate the assistant public affairs position as 3/3 Russian-language capability. (Action: Embassy Tallinn, in coordination with EUR and DGHR)

Exchanges and Cultural and Educational Programs Serve Policy Goals

International Visitor Leadership programs are tied to mission goals; mission sections nominate and a mission committee selects participants. The Fulbright program, however, is not as focused on mission priorities. The public affairs officer is planning to use the renewal of the recently expired Fulbright memorandum of understanding with the Ministry of Education and Research as an opportunity to restructure the program; align it more with mission objectives; increase Estonian Government engagement; and open the application process to broader, more diverse sectors of the Estonian population.

Using “Soft Power” to Achieve Mission Objectives

Using a cultural program to deliver a policy message, the public affairs section had an extraordinary impact through a series of concerts by the U.S. Army Jazz Band, “Musik Brigade.” Uniformed U.S. military personnel performing a series of concerts, speaking with high school students, and engaging audiences conveyed the message that the U. S. military is a friendly partner. The embassy Facebook page built expectations with advance Facebook posts and followed up with photos of performances and audience interaction. The leading Russian-language newspaper in Estonia described the performances as “a roaring success.”

American Spaces Are Aimed at Priority Audiences

The modern American Space at Tallinn Technical University attracts the target audience of educated students and soon-to-be professionals. The American Corner in the city of Narva’s main public library branch is aimed at Russian-speaking audiences. With funds from a recent Innovation Award from the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy, the public affairs section plans to expand that American Corner to include high-tech 3-D printers and more computers. It will engage experts from Tallinn Technical University to train local Narva tech personnel in using the equipment, with the aim of spurring innovation and entrepreneurship in this economically depressed region. The public affairs officer has rightly chosen to concentrate resources on these two priority spaces, while still employing the other two American Corners in smaller cities as venues for regional outreach programs and locally generated projects.

Grants Administration Is In Order

Grants files are in order, with no issues with grants administration; however, the LE staff has not received formal training in a number of years. In response to Federal reporting regulations that went into effect in 2014, the public affairs section indicated to the OIG team that employees would take advantage of Department-offered training plans to learn the new procedures. The public affairs section awards small grants of a few thousand dollars each to local Estonian organizations vetted by the public affairs officer and assistant public affairs officer. The public affairs officer plans to make the small grants more strategic and include other mission sections in a more systematic way, aiming for a more targeted impact.

Consular Management

Embassy Tallinn’s single-officer consular section suffered successive curtailments of assigned officers in the 20 months between February 2013 and September 2014. During that period, eight temporary duty officers provided approximately 10 months of management coverage. Despite

the frequent staff changes, no consular service backlogs existed and visa adjudications were consistent and documented in case notes.

The new consular chief arrived in Tallinn in September 2014 and is systematically reviewing management controls, operating procedures, crisis preparedness, budgets, and reporting requirements to identify and address any problems arising from the extended periods of temporary duty coverage. The consular chief is integrated into the leadership structure of the mission and is included in the Ambassador's biweekly leadership "huddles" as well as the country team, emergency action committee, and law enforcement working group.

Embassy Tallinn's two Estonian consular LE staff members are well trained and experienced, combining for more than 30 years' tenure in the section. They are supported by a half-time, experienced consular associate. In March 2014, Tallinn began participating in the Bureau of Consular Affairs' Global Support Strategy, which provides contractor-based services for visa information, appointments, fee payment, and document delivery services.

When the consular chief arrived in September 2014, small but chronic cumulative deficits in Embassy Tallinn's visa fee-to-service reconciliations had persisted since at least the beginning of FY 2013. The cumulative deficit at the beginning of FY 2014 was \$5,449. At the consular chief's initiative, the embassy and the Bureau of Consular Affairs conducted an analysis of fee-to-service reconciliations for FY 2014. Corrections of data errors resulted in a reduction of the cumulative deficit at the end of the fiscal year to \$694, representing a positive balance for FY 2014 of \$4,754, which is in line with normal expectations.

Visa Adjudication Reviews Are Not Compliant

The DCM has not met requirements in 9 FAM 41.113 and 9 FAM 41.121 to review nonimmigrant visa issuances and refusals. The most recent regional consular officer report for Tallinn, dated January 2014, states that "[t]he DCM did not meet adjudication review standards...since the last regional officer report visit [in May 2013]." A Bureau of Consular Affairs preinspection report found that standards had also not been met between May 1 and July 30, 2014. The DCM's review of visa adjudications at single officer embassies is especially important, as no other person provides required oversight and quality control.

Recommendation 10: Embassy Tallinn should require the deputy chief of mission to perform visa adjudication reviews in accordance with Department of State regulations. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Warden System Has Not Been Assessed or Tested

Embassy Tallinn's warden system has not been assessed for operational effectiveness, as required by 7 FAM 073, since at least 2011. (A "warden" is someone who provides a reliable way for the Department to reach U.S. citizens in the event of an emergency, disaster, or threat.) The lengthy succession of temporary duty consular chiefs prohibited the long-term planning required to do so. Worldwide political tensions require an effective warden system with the flexibility to meet multiple contingencies, including the potential interruption of electronic messaging capability.

Recommendation 11: Embassy Tallinn, in coordination with the Bureau of Consular Affairs, should review, update, and test its warden system. (Action: Embassy Tallinn, in coordination with CA)

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Table 1: FY 2014 Staffing and Funding, by Agency

Agency	U.S. Direct-hire Staff	U.S. Locally Employed Staff	Foreign National Staff	*Total Staff	Funding (\$)
U.S. Department of State					
Diplomatic and Consular Programs	13	1	6	20	1,541,300
Presidential Visit					273,000
Consular	1	1	2	4	284,458
International Cooperative Administrative Support Services	3	9	23	35	2,352,300
Diplomatic Security				0	1,562,300
Overseas Buildings Operations				0	737,000
Public Diplomacy	2	0	6	8	691,920
Presidential Visit					50,000
Diplomatic Security	2	1	5	8	433,747
Marine Security	6	0	4	10	218,350
Representation				0	27,600
Overseas Buildings Operations				0	1,010,493
U.S. Department of Defense					
Defense Attaché Office	3	0	1	4	286,290
Office of Defense Cooperation	1	0	2	3	255,913
Army/U.S. European Command	1	0	0	1	50,360
Defense/Special Operations Command Europe	1	0	0	1	75,000
U.S. Army Security Assistance Training Management Operations	5	0	0	5	50,000
U.S. Department of Justice					
Legal Attaché	1	0	0	1	70,873
U.S. Department of Homeland Security					
U.S. Secret Service	3	0	1	4	504,563

*Staffing totals reflect authorized positions not actual personnel.

Source: Embassy Tallinn, Estonia.

Management Overview

Management operations at Embassy Tallinn were recently disrupted for a 6-month period because of curtailments in the management and general services officer positions. Both positions have recently been filled, and the new team is moving quickly to establish priorities and respond to deficiencies identified by the OIG team. The section is increasingly challenged by a growing U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) presence in country. Some DOD personnel fall under chief of mission authority; others under the NATO Status of Forces Agreement, which complicates administrative support expectations.

The Ambassador established a quarterly all-agency management working group that reviews the status of management projects and sets priorities. The new management team inherits a section where the most recent International Cooperative Administrative Support Services (ICASS) customer satisfaction scores matched or exceeded worldwide averages in all but a few areas. This reflects the customer service orientation of the LE staff members, many of whom have been with the embassy since it was reopened in 1991.

The OIG team found that the post profile, designation list, and most management policies and procedures were out of date. Management leadership addressed many of these deficiencies during the inspection, but much remains to be done. The thinly staffed section struggles whenever an LE staff member is ill or on leave, because the LE staff members are all in multifunctional positions that back up other positions. Many LE staff members do not have training for their backup duties. Furthermore, and as addressed in this report, although the work may get done to the satisfaction of customers, it is often not in accordance with Department procedural and separation-of-duty regulations. This raises questions about the adequacy of internal management controls. The management officer is exploring alternative administrative support options, for example, through a post support unit.

U.S. direct-hire employees are authorized a post differential due to hardship related to the climate and isolation. A cost-of-living allowance is authorized as a result of the high cost of living in Estonia's Eurozone economy.

Facilities and Real Property

Embassy Tallinn has serious concerns about maintenance issues at the aging chancery, evidenced by the lower-than-average building maintenance score on the 2014 ICASS survey. The chancery, constructed in 1920 as an apartment building, is a six-story building in the center of Tallinn. A two-story structure with garages and storage rooms rings a walled courtyard at the rear of the building. Recently, the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO) changed the chancery's lease designation, which will provide a regular funding stream for maintenance and repair.

Prospective New Chancery Building

Embassy Tallinn is no longer on the OBO Capital Security Construction Program 'Top 80' list for a new embassy compound; however, because of the chancery building's immediate maintenance and security needs, the embassy located and proposed to the Department an

alternative chancery building, located 3 miles from the current chancery. OBO is reviewing the proposal.

Inadequate Maintenance Management

The facilities maintenance unit, supervised by the general services officer (GSO), follows routine preventive maintenance practices for the embassy compound, the leased chief of mission residence, the deputy chief of mission residence, and the Marine security guard detachment house. The maintenance team deals also with some maintenance issues at the leased residences of other American staff.

In early 2014, a burst coolant pipe in the attic flooded two floors in the controlled access area, requiring the temporary relocation of some embassy functions for more than 8 months while repairs were made. The light-gauge metal roof is approaching the end of its useful life—the rear exterior façade and front archway of the building have cracks, and sink holes have appeared both in the front and rear of the chancery. In July 2014, OBO allocated \$600,000 for a new generator and associated switchgear to replace the problematic generator. Installation is targeted for the first half of 2015. The generator fuel tank has water infiltration. The GSO is dealing with the issue; he will need assistance from the regional facility management officer at Embassy Helsinki and OBO to determine the source of the water and the scope of work for repairs.

The embassy has no comprehensive preventive, routine, and special maintenance programs for evaluating facility maintenance at the chancery, as required in 15 FAM 613 b. Regional support from Embassy Helsinki has not been as robust as it should be because of long-term staffing issues in Helsinki and the small and technically limited local facilities maintenance staff in Tallinn. At present, no memorandum of understanding exists between the embassy and Embassy Helsinki's recently arrived regional facilities manager. Embassy Tallinn's GSO is drafting a new agreement, which will clarify expectations and address specific issues and concerns.

Recommendation 12: Embassy Tallinn should establish a preventive and routine maintenance program. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Recommendation 13: Embassy Tallinn should establish a comprehensive memorandum of understanding between Embassy Tallinn and regional facilities support in Helsinki. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Safety, Health, and Environmental Management Deficiencies

The embassy has not adhered to the record keeping and documentation requirements prescribed by 15 FAM 966 and cannot locate records and documentation that the post occupational safety and health officer should maintain. As no dedicated facility manager is at the embassy, the role of the post occupational safety and health officer falls to the GSO.

Recommendation 14: Embassy Tallinn should document, safeguard, and retain all documentation related to safety and occupational health. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

The embassy has no safety, health, and environmental management committee, as required by 15 FAM 933.2, which would provide oversight of the safety, occupational health, and

environmental issues program. As a result, two of the three priority issues from OBO's July 2013 report—one relating to the need for residential ground resistance measurement, the other to the need for the installation of ground-fault circuit interrupter sockets at the chancery—remain open.

Recommendation 15: Embassy Tallinn should establish an embassy safety, health, and environmental management committee. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Human Resources

The OIG inspectors reviewed and found no issues with the timely submission of American and LE staff performance reports, the awards program, and the processes for hiring eligible family members and LE staff members and for classifying their positions. The post language program offers both Estonian- and Russian-language training. However, the inspectors found that time and attendance approving officers were approving their own timesheets. The embassy corrected this management control deficiency during the inspection.

Equal Employment Opportunity and Federal Women's Programs Are Weak

The EEO program at Embassy Tallinn requires attention by embassy leadership. The one EEO counselor at post is diligent in disseminating information to the mission community through the embassy's internal Web site and EEO bulletin board, but records do not show that the Department or embassy has conducted formal EEO training on site or that embassy leadership has promoted EEO principles. Many LE staff members did not know the process for filing a complaint. Language in 13 FAM 312.3 states that all employees are expected to participate in EEO/diversity awareness training courses on average of every 5 years.

Recommendation 16: Embassy Tallinn, in coordination with the Office of Civil Rights, should schedule Equal Employment Opportunity training for all embassy employees. (Action: Embassy Tallinn, in coordination with S/OCR)

The embassy has not had a Federal Women's Program coordinator since 2009 and does not have a designated local employee EEO liaison. Guidance in 3 FAM 1514.2 states that the Chief of Mission shall designate a Federal Women's Program coordinator and encourages posts to identify a non-American LE liaison for EEO issues. Weak EEO and Federal Women's programs deny employees knowledge of both EEO regulations and their rights.

Recommendation 17: Embassy Tallinn should designate and train a Federal Women's Program coordinator and locally employed staff Equal Employment Opportunity liaison. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Locally Employed Staff Issues

The embassy has no LE staff committee. During interviews, the LE staff expressed little interest in forming an LE committee. LE staff members meet quarterly with the DCM and feel that they have full access to mission leadership.

No Locally Employed Staff Training Plan

The embassy does not have a comprehensive LE staff training plan, nor does the human resources section have accurate records of employee training. Many LE staff members in the management section have backup responsibilities for other management duties for which they are not formally trained. This situation exposes the embassy to inefficiency, inadequate internal controls, and potential financial loss. Per 3 FAM 7631, ambassadors are responsible for providing training for the LE staff, as necessary, which is intended to help increase employee proficiency. The embassy would benefit from a comprehensive plan that reflects priority training needs of the LE staff and is centrally managed.

Recommendation 18: Embassy Tallinn should establish a comprehensive, missionwide locally employed staff training plan. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Financial Management

Budget and financial planning, vouchering, and cashing all scored higher than average on the FY 2014 ICASS worldwide survey. In addition, Embassy Tallinn received the highest score possible in its most recent cashier risk assessment that was conducted by the Bureau of the Controller and Global Financial Services.

The OIG team found no anomalies in funds management, accounting, unliquidated obligations, and travel advances, and it observed successful, unannounced monthly cash verification. Value-added tax refunds, which are 20 percent of all invoices, are reimbursed quickly and smoothly. The OIG team observed deficiencies in the management controls and process of the vouchering examination section, which is discussed in the Management Controls section of the report.

Improper Payment of Official Residence Expense Salaries

For convenience, the embassy pays the salaries of the Ambassador's and the DCM's official residence employees directly into the employees' bank accounts via electronic funds transfer. Per 3 FAM 3257 a., official residence staff are not employees of the U.S. Government and should be paid directly by the principal representative. Paying official residence staff salaries via electronic funds transfer establishes a direct relationship between the staff and the U.S. Government, which is a violation of FAM regulations and covered by an OIG/ISP Management Assistance Report (ISP-I-14-08, April 2014).

Recommendation 19: Embassy Tallinn should discontinue electronic funds transfer salary payments to official residence staff and require the Ambassador and the deputy chief of mission to pay the official residence staff directly. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Improper Emergency Cash Payment for Representational Event

Any cash payment of more than \$500 is considered an emergency cash payment and must be justified. In March 2014, an emergency cash payment of approximately \$1,380 was made to reimburse the Ambassador for a representational event he hosted. This payment is contrary to language in 4 FAH 3 H-394.2-2, which provides exception for bona fide emergencies. The payment was not an emergency under these regulations. In addition, the voucher did not contain relevant documentation or justification to support the payment as an emergency,

required per 4 FAH 3 H-394.3 a. The Ambassador should not have requested an emergency payment that was contrary to regulations.

Recommendation 20: Embassy Tallinn should arrange for refresher training on emergency cash payments for the Ambassador. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Recommendation 21: Embassy Tallinn should communicate the regulations for emergency cash payments to all embassy employees. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

International Cooperative Administrative Support Services Meetings Undocumented

Overall worldwide ICASS scores for Embassy Tallinn in 2014 were higher than the regional and worldwide scores. In addition, embassy scores have been trending upward since 2010. The embassy has an ICASS policy regarding support to temporary duty employees and charged both DOD and the Bureau of Diplomatic Security for partial-year invoices, as required by 6 FAH-5 H-360. However, no documented minutes exist for ICASS council meetings since 2009, as required per 6 FAH-5 H-222.3-3 c. The lack of documentation can lead to future misunderstandings among ICASS agencies. Documenting all decisions and recommendations (e.g., new positions, wage increases, purchase of new equipment and vehicles, commitments to change or correct workload counts, and so forth) is essential to a transparent ICASS program.

Recommendation 22: Embassy Tallinn should maintain and publish minutes of all International Cooperative Administrative Support Services council meetings. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Insufficient Supporting Documentation for Payment Vouchers

The procurement to disbursement cycle follows the conventional approval path in the Department's Ariba procurement system. However, payments are being made by certifying officers without all of the required supporting documentation being physically attached to the payment vouchers, as required by 4 FAH-3 H-423. The OIG inspector reviewed FY 2014 vouchers and found deficiencies, including missing copies of receiving reports and purchase orders, no English translations of invoices written in Estonian, and in one case, a DOD lease payment was made without an attached copy of the lease contract. However, the supporting documentation was on file elsewhere, and the inspector found no evidence of improper payments.

Recommendation 23: Embassy Tallinn should establish a standard operating procedure for the entire payment process, including U.S. Department of Defense payments, from voucher examination to certification and final disbursement. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

General Services

The OIG inspectors reviewed operations in procurement, housing, customs and shipping, motor pool, and property management. One U.S. direct-hire employee manages general services. Because the general services office only has eight employees to cover its portfolio of housing, procurement, nonexpendable and expendable property management, warehousing, customs and shipping, motor pool, and customer service, LE staff members have multiple duties, either as part of their daily responsibilities or as backups to other staff members in their sections. This situation has led to separation-of-duty concerns, oversight issues, and a lack of clear

management controls, primarily in property and inventory management. The general services office does not use the Department's eServices automated system, so all service requests flow through the facilities management section rather than through a centralized system. Absent eServices, no meaningful service metrics exist for the section. The GSO plans to migrate to eServices in the next year.

Procurement and Contracting

The small procurement unit observes proper acquisition procedures, and embassy contracts contain the required Federal Acquisition Regulation clause on trafficking in persons. The customs and shipping unit stated that working with Estonian customs officials is easy and fast.

No Annual Government Purchase Card Reviews

The seven purchase card holders at the embassy use the cards for daily micropurchases, which are limited to a maximum of \$3,000. Each card holder prepares a reconciliation monthly, which is signed by the GSO, as the approving officer. However, the embassy has no record that annual purchase card reviews have been performed, as required by 4 FAM 455.3. The annual review is a crucial management tool in the control and oversight of the purchase card program.

Recommendation 24: Embassy Tallinn should perform the annual purchase card review for 2014 and then annually as mandated. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Property Management Lacks Transparency and Proper Documentation

The property management team executes receiving, property transfers, inventories and reconciliations, and database management. The nonexpendable property management process lacks transparency, clarity, and documentation, as required by 14 FAM 414, and raises separation-of-duty concerns. The lack of standard operating procedures and defined responsibilities creates uncertainty and is a management control weakness.

Recommendation 25: Embassy Tallinn should establish standard operating procedures for the property and inventory management functions. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Warehousing and Storage

The embassy disposed of its leased warehouse as a cost-cutting measure and moved to a commercial warehouse located 7 miles from the embassy. The embassy stores old building materials, excess appliances, and other property surplus to its needs in the chancery out-buildings. Storage rooms are disorganized, lack racks, have poor ventilation, and are cluttered, contrary to 14 FAM 413.7. They could be better used, as described in 14 FAH-1 H-318.2. Property could be more efficiently organized, easily identified, and more effectively managed. The chancery attic is used to store random old property, building materials, and empty boxes, which pose a fire hazard. The GSO is planning to perform a major clean-up of both the storage spaces and the attic.

Expendable Supplies

Annual inventory records are in order. The embassy's accountable property officer was able to reconcile the total inventory value to within 1 percent of the allowable discrepancy range, as outlined in the Department's property management requirements (4 FAM 410, DS Form 582). Embassy sections and agencies use dedicated "client cards" to order from the local office supply contractor through the Ariba procurement system. This process allows for direct charging of purchases to the agency or section. A management section employee is accountable for a small supply of expendable supplies purchased in Europe and from the United States. The OIG inspectors found deficiencies in the control and accountability of these supplies, which are addressed in the Management Controls section of this report.

Housing

Embassy U.S. direct-hire employees are assigned to U.S. Government short-term leased housing. No U.S. Government-owned houses are in Estonia. OIG inspectors visited the Ambassador's and the DCM's residences as well as a variety of other houses and apartments, and found them to be well located and appropriate for their purposes. The embassy obtained lease waivers from OBO in four cases where it was in the interest of the U.S. Government to retain the property. All housing is otherwise within OBO-established rent benchmarks and space standards. The inspectors also reviewed 12 percent of lease files and found that some were missing the regional security office approval required prior to occupancy. Newer files are better organized. Maintenance of short-term leased housing is primarily the responsibility of the landlord, but when circumstances require the embassy to make the repairs, the cost of repairs is deducted from the next rent payment.

Motor Pool

The embassy's small fleet reflects the easy availability of taxis and public transportation in Tallinn for employees on official business. Only the Ambassador and Marine security detachment have dedicated vehicles. The remaining fleet is geared toward meeting the maintenance needs of the embassy and movement of official visitors. Authorized automotive repair shops maintain all vehicles. As a cost-saving measure and to promote "green" American products, the fleet includes two U.S.-made electric sedans. The GSO has deferred replacement of a low-mileage, well-maintained vehicle and believes that the motor pool can be reduced by one vehicle.

The OIG inspectors found the following motor pool processes to be in order: daily vehicle use sheets, charging for other authorized use, fuel card invoice reconciliation, and required training for all drivers. Embassy Tallinn will soon migrate to the Fleet Management Information System module of the Integrated Logistical Management System, which will streamline record keeping and strengthen internal controls.

Duty Hours for Ambassador's and Marine Security Detachment's Drivers Exceed Limit

The Ambassador's and the Marine security detachment's drivers routinely work more than 10 hours per day. The Ambassador's driver's workday is a minimum of 11 hours, and the Marine drivers each work 12-hour shifts to ensure 24-hour coverage. Driver staffing at post limits the embassy's flexibility to bring duty hours into compliance with guidelines. Per 14 FAM 432.4, embassies must ensure that overtime duty hours for drivers and incidental operators do not

exceed limits prescribed in the Department's Motor Vehicle Safety Management Policy. The policy states that when day-to-day requirements lead to shifts exceeding 10 hours on duty, an embassy must make arrangements for another operator to cover any time that exceeds 10 hours. This requirement also applies to the Ambassador's driver. Excessive work hours increase the potential for motor vehicle mishaps caused by driver fatigue.

Recommendation 26: Embassy Tallinn should reduce the regular duty hours of the Ambassador's and the Marine security detachment's drivers to 10 hours. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Travel

The OIG inspectors' review of travel services found that all local travel is properly authorized via e2 Solutions, the Department's travel and expense management application; no premium travel has been authorized since the former ambassador departed; and all internal travel is based on an accurate per diem. Most official travel within Estonia can be accomplished in 1 day, and travel authorizations are not issued for travel under 12 hours. The embassy has a contract with a local travel agency for ticket issuance. The shipping clerk is the e2 Solutions backup but has had no training on the application.

Information Management

The information management office maintains operations despite a challenging physical infrastructure. Customers rated their satisfaction with information management services highly in OIG and ICASS surveys. The small size of the post has allowed information management staff to give personal attention to customers. However, documentation of services, processes, and infrastructure has been neglected, and the challenges of the physical plant have engendered a reactive mode among staff. Many of the required duties of the information systems security officer (ISSO) have been overlooked. Department attention is required for many of the infrastructure challenges, and a more proactive approach to planning and documentation will help the information management office be prepared for contingencies.

Telecommunications Infrastructure Hampers Operations

The chancery's physical infrastructure imposes limitations on the ability of information management personnel to carry out their duties effectively. The telecommunications wiring infrastructure throughout the building is disorganized and largely undocumented. The OIG team observed messy, tangled wiring in ceiling spaces throughout the building, within junction boxes, and at network switches under desks. Some of this wiring includes abandoned cables, and some of the wiring in plenum spaces is not rated for that usage, which is a fire hazard. Common support tasks, such as adding a telephone line, thus take longer than normal to accomplish because unlabeled wires must be traced first or pulled anew. The demarcation point between local and Department telecommunications equipment, typically in an external facility, is here located in the telephone frame room, which also houses other equipment not normally located there. The telephone frame room as it is arrayed is not conducive to ease of administration of the computerized telephone system.

The logical and physical layout of the telecommunications infrastructure does not clearly follow Department standards, per 5 FAH-9 H-300, and is confusing in some cases, compounding the difficulties of network troubleshooting and adding significantly to workload. The wiring infrastructure for power is similarly inconsistent and has resulted in an ad hoc approach to power cabling over many years. The automatic voltage regulator is faulty, resulting in damaged equipment and blown multimeters. Information management personnel are often obliged to invent workarounds in the cabling in order to maintain operations, which can fix a short-term problem but ultimately compound the infrastructure issues if not properly documented.

Recommendation 27: The Bureau of Information Resource Management should conduct an information technology infrastructure remediation project at Embassy Tallinn. (Action: IRM)

Information Systems Center Server Room Improperly Located

The information systems center server room is located in a corner of the building with two exterior walls, contrary to what is recommended in 12 FAM 629.4-2. One of these walls has a large window, and the other wall is shared with the neighboring building, which is not controlled by the U.S. Government. The server room has no fire suppression system. Extinguishers as well as an emergency shutoff button are located outside. However, it is an inconspicuous switch posted high on the wall and is not labeled in English. Deficiencies in the physical security of the information systems center server room compound the risks imposed by the substandard infrastructure already noted.

Recommendation 28: Embassy Tallinn should relocate the information systems center server room to an interior portion of the building, away from areas of frequent use and potential sources of fire or flooding. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Insufficient Planning and Documentation

Information management personnel described their operations as taking place in a largely reactive and “firefighting” mode, a result of lean staffing and a challenging infrastructure. This approach is reflected in the lack of documentation of planning activities and work processes. The section has not performed any formal strategic planning and has not had any formal participation in embassy budgeting processes, aside from requests associated with end-of-year funds. Work requirements statements are not current for U.S. direct-hire staff members. Standard operating procedures are either not available for many information management functions or not sufficiently detailed to assist a new employee or temporary rover. The contingency plan for OpenNet operations has some components that require updating. No contingency plan exists for classified network operations. Results of testing, such as radio tests or drills, are not sufficiently documented.

Embassy personnel generally do not submit eServices requests for information management support. Given the small size of the mission, it is more typical simply to call one of the systems administrators for assistance. The information systems center staff estimated that only 10 percent of the work they do is captured in eServices. The lack of documentation of the work performed negatively affects the ability of the information management officer to plan and allocate resources effectively. It also decreases the staff’s ability to provide documentation in support of resource requests.

Recommendation 29: Embassy Tallinn should require eServices submissions for the completion of all information management support requests. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Information Systems Security Officer Duties Neglected

ISSO duties are not being consistently performed. Department policy outlined in 5 FAM 824, among others, enumerates a host of responsibilities incumbent upon the ISSO. For most of his tenure at post, the ISSO has simultaneously held additional positions with collateral duties, including most recently acting information management officer and certifying officer. He stated that he has not had time to perform [REDACTED] and other duties that are required of an ISSO. However, the OIG team did not observe negative effects from this oversight, as system administrators have been otherwise conscientious in duties, such as patch management and correcting low iPost (a network and systems monitoring tool) risk scores. The information management officer was recently designated the alternate ISSO, and duties will be split so as to avoid potential conflicts of interest. However, at current staffing levels, fully completing the duties of the ISSO will likely continue to be a challenge.

Dedicated Internet Network Lacks Controls

The embassy has one dedicated Internet network with 15 workstations in the public affairs and general services office spaces. This network supports functions that cannot be performed on OpenNet. However, the registration of this network with the Department's Information Technology Configuration Control Board has expired. The network was designed using hubs instead of switches and local logons to the workstations, which increases the workload on information management staff to support the network because it is not centrally managed. The embassy has begun to implement a domain controller to centralize authentication and management; however, it would also be beneficial to decrease the footprint of the network to minimize administration workload and to reconsider the business need for the network when it is resubmitted for registration.

Recommendation 30: Embassy Tallinn should define the business need for its dedicated Internet network and submit a new registration to the Department's Information Technology Configuration Control Board. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Inadequate Mail Facilities [REDACTED]

Mail operations at the mission present challenges because of staffing and facilities. A part-time eligible family member is responsible for the majority of diplomatic post office and mail room operations. He was not available during the inspection, and until his return in several months, one or both of the U.S. direct-hire employees will spend up to 2 hours daily on mail operations. Standard operating procedures in the mail room are not sufficiently detailed, and no list of authorized users was found for the unclassified pouch. The information management officer is planning on hiring a full-time local American to take over those duties after the eligible family member leaves post, which would help to normalize and document operations.

The diplomatic post office and mail room is essentially a garage bay in the chancery courtyard. Within the bay, a smaller room that houses the diplomatic post office and mailboxes has been built out with walls but no ceiling. Information management staff reported that during the winter, with no ceiling or insulation, the room temperature is generally well below freezing. The

Internet connection for the U.S. Postal Service Click-N-Ship system is via a 3G iPhone used as an access point. Classified pouches have no official storage location. After pouch bags are opened, parcels are stored in the limited access area halls and any available space within the controlled access area. The embassy has not provided staff with safety equipment for mail handling, such as back braces or steel-toed shoes. Inadequate facilities and equipment increases the difficulty and time investment in mail and pouch operations, as well as the risks to the safety and security of personnel and the integrity of packages.

Recommendation 31: The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, in coordination with Embassy Tallinn, should review the design and construction of mail facilities at Embassy Tallinn and make modifications to improve the safety and efficiency of operations. (Action: OBO, in coordination with Embassy Tallinn)

[Redacted] (b) (5), [Redacted] (b) (7)(F)
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

Recommendation 32: [Redacted] (b) (5), [Redacted] (b) (7)(F)
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

Security

Embassy Tallinn's regional security office continues to address a range of security challenges presented by the aging chancery and the addition of commercial office space leased for the U.S. Secret Service. In 2013, the embassy received a U.S. direct-hire assistant regional security officer position. The office is improving security documentation and upgrading the embassy's physical security profile, absent the Department's approval for relocating the embassy. Additionally, the chancery's emergency power system, which does not function to Department and Overseas Security Policy Board standards, is slated for replacement in early 2015. Also of concern is the Ambassador's inconsistent adherence to security policies. Security issues are discussed in the classified annex to the inspection report.

MISSION SUPPORT SERVICES

Community Liaison Office

The community liaison office staffing consists of a part-time coordinator and a part-time newsletter editor. The coordinator runs a sponsor and orientation program and organizes events to build morale among the various segments of the mission community. Absent an employee association to provide funding for community events, the coordinator raises funds through special events.

Improper Handling of Cash from Fund Raising Events

The coordinator personally holds cash received from fund raising events. Per 2 FAM 113.7-2, coordinators should handle community funds through either an employee association or a local bank account. Embassy Tallinn does not have an employee association, nor does the amount of funds justify banking fees. Department guidelines state that when neither an association nor bank account is a workable solution, the funds should be kept in the locked repository of another embassy official, for example, the management officer. Community liaison coordinators are not bonded and risk being held personally liable for the loss of any money they collect and hold.

Recommendation 33: Embassy Tallinn should safeguard community liaison office funds in the secure container of another embassy officer. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Health Unit

The embassy's health unit is staffed by a full-time LE nurse who has contacts with local medical providers and coordinates medical evacuations to London or the United States. The regional medical officer at Embassy Warsaw and the regional psychiatrist at Embassy Moscow support Embassy Tallinn. An encrypted digital video camera unit allows for private consultations between patients and regional physicians.

The health unit maintains a small supply of controlled substances initially procured when the embassy had a U.S. direct-hire nurse practitioner who could prescribe drugs. Controlled substances, which the LE nurse dispenses only when prescribed by a regional physician, are safeguarded in a secure container. The regional medical officer in Warsaw verifies the inventory during his visits.

International Schools

Of the [redacted] school-age dependents, [Redacted] (b) (6) of Estonia, a Department-sponsored school that has received both educational and soft-target grants. The embassy has held a permanent seat on the school board since it was founded in 1995. In 2014, however, the school underwent a legal reorganization to address [Redacted] (b) (6) legal and tax issues, and the embassy no longer has guaranteed board representation. The DCM is an elected member of the newly constituted board.

As reflected in OIG questionnaires and personal interviews, parents have expressed some dissatisfaction with the international school that school administration is taking steps to address. Both the DCM and the regional education officer from the Office of Overseas Schools have expressed concern about the school's financial sustainability because of high teacher salaries, uncertain tax exposure, and increased competition.

With the establishment in 2013 of the European Union-sponsored and subsidized [redacted] [Redacted] (b) (6), embassy parents now have a choice of schools. [Redacted] (b) (6) dependents now attend the [Redacted] (b) (6), and the community liaison officer is reaching out to the school administration. Two dependents are home schooled, and an away-from-post educational allowance is authorized for parents who wish to send their children to school abroad. In light of

past curtailments, greater efforts are needed to manage expectations with regard to the schools' ability to accommodate children with special needs. Reinforced embassy efforts to interface frequently with the Bureau of Human Resources and the Office of Medical Services and to update information in the Post Report, bidding tool, and materials housed at the Overseas Briefing Center would contribute to a more realistic understanding of options for bidders.

MANAGEMENT CONTROLS

The Ambassador's 2014 management control statement of assurance identified no major management control weaknesses at Embassy Tallinn but alerted the Department to concerns that the recent series of temporary duty consular officers could compromise effective management control and visa adjudications. The inspectors found the backup documentation in support of the Ambassador's certification to be complete.

As described elsewhere in this report, the inspectors identified several internal control deficiencies that require attention as follows:

Expendable Supply Management Deficiencies

The employee accountable for expendable supplies does not have sole access to the supply room. Both maintenance staff and other property management staff have need to access the storeroom for their purposes and can check out the key from the Martine security Post 1. The embassy feels that the small expendable supply inventory did not warrant segregation. Per 14 FAM 414.4, the property management officer must ensure that procedures are in place to maintain control of stock inventories and establish safeguards to ensure that supplies are issued for official use only. Failure to secure the expendable supplies could result in loss to the U.S. Government.

Recommendation 34: Embassy Tallinn should limit access to the expendable supply inventory to authorized accountable employees. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

The inspectors also found that the accountable storekeeper also conducts storeroom inventories. Per 14 FAM 411.2 d., whenever possible, duties involving property record keeping and conducting an inventory are to be separated. Flawed expendable supply control could result in a financial loss to the U.S. Government.

Recommendation 35: Embassy Tallinn should establish procedures whereby someone other than the accountable employee conducts the annual inventory of expendable supplies. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: Embassy Tallinn should implement a planning effort that reinforces knowledge of and adherence to mission goals and that includes annual planning sessions and quarterly reviews. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Recommendation 2: Embassy Tallinn should inform all embassy staff, including locally employed staff, of the unclassified outcome of the planning sessions and reviews. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Recommendation 3: Embassy Tallinn should arrange for leadership and team-building training for the Ambassador and country team. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Recommendation 4: The Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, in coordination with the Office of the Legal Adviser, should counsel the Embassy Tallinn Ambassador concerning ways to avoid breaches of Department of State rules and regulations. (Action: EUR)

Recommendation 5: Embassy Tallinn should update the position descriptions of the locally employed staff in the political/economic section. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Recommendation 6: Embassy Tallinn, in coordination with the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs and the Bureau of Human Resources, should eliminate the Estonian-language requirement for the economic-commercial officer position in the next triennial review of the Department of State's language-designated positions. (Action: Embassy Tallinn, in coordination with EUR and DGHR)

Recommendation 7: Embassy Tallinn, in coordination with the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs and the Bureau of Human Resources, should change the Estonian-language proficiency requirement for the political officer position to 3/3 Russian capability in the next triennial review. (Action: Embassy Tallinn, in coordination with EUR and DGHR)

Recommendation 8: Embassy Tallinn should hire a locally employed staff member or eligible family member on a part-time basis to carry out administrative duties in the public affairs section. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Recommendation 9: Embassy Tallinn, in coordination with the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs and the Bureau of Human Resources, should designate the assistant public affairs position as 3/3 Russian-language capability. (Action: Embassy Tallinn, in coordination with EUR and DGHR)

Recommendation 10: Embassy Tallinn should require the deputy chief of mission to perform visa adjudication reviews in accordance with Department of State regulations. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Recommendation 11: Embassy Tallinn, in coordination with the Bureau of Consular Affairs, should review, update, and test its warden system. (Action: Embassy Tallinn, in coordination with CA)

Recommendation 12: Embassy Tallinn should establish a preventive and routine maintenance program. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Recommendation 13: Embassy Tallinn should establish a comprehensive memorandum of understanding between Embassy Tallinn and regional facilities support in Helsinki. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Recommendation 14: Embassy Tallinn should document, safeguard, and retain all documentation related to safety and occupational health. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Recommendation 15: Embassy Tallinn should establish an embassy safety, health, and environmental management committee. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Recommendation 16: Embassy Tallinn, in coordination with the Office of Civil Rights, should schedule Equal Employment Opportunity training for all embassy employees. (Action: Embassy Tallinn, in coordination with S/OCR)

Recommendation 17: Embassy Tallinn should designate and train a Federal Women's Program coordinator and locally employed staff Equal Employment Opportunity liaison. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Recommendation 18: Embassy Tallinn should establish a comprehensive, missionwide locally employed staff training plan. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Recommendation 19: Embassy Tallinn should discontinue electronic funds transfer salary payments to official residence staff and require the Ambassador and the deputy chief of mission to pay the official residence staff directly. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Recommendation 20: Embassy Tallinn should arrange for refresher training on emergency cash payments for the Ambassador. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Recommendation 21: Embassy Tallinn should communicate the regulations for emergency cash payments to all embassy employees. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Recommendation 22: Embassy Tallinn should maintain and publish minutes of all International Cooperative Administrative Support Services council meetings. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Recommendation 23: Embassy Tallinn should establish a standard operating procedure for the entire payment process, including U.S. Department of Defense payments, from voucher examination to certification and final disbursement. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Recommendation 24: Embassy Tallinn should perform the annual purchase card review for 2014 and then annually as mandated. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Recommendation 25: Embassy Tallinn should establish standard operating procedures for the property and inventory management functions. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Recommendation 26: Embassy Tallinn should reduce the regular duty hours of the Ambassador's and the Marine security detachment's drivers to 10 hours. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Recommendation 27: The Bureau of Information Resource Management should conduct an information technology infrastructure remediation project at Embassy Tallinn. (Action: IRM)

Recommendation 28: Embassy Tallinn should relocate the information systems center server room to an interior portion of the building, away from areas of frequent use and potential sources of fire or flooding. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Recommendation 29: Embassy Tallinn should require eServices submissions for the completion of all information management support requests. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Recommendation 30: Embassy Tallinn should define the business need for its dedicated Internet network and submit a new registration to the Department's Information Technology Configuration Control Board. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Recommendation 31: The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, in coordination with Embassy Tallinn, should review the design and construction of mail facilities at Embassy Tallinn and make modifications to improve the safety and efficiency of operations. (Action: OBO, in coordination with Embassy Tallinn)

Recommendation 32: [Redacted] (b) (5), [Redacted] (b) (7)(F)

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Recommendation 33: Embassy Tallinn should safeguard community liaison office funds in the secure container of another embassy officer. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Recommendation 34: Embassy Tallinn should limit access to the expendable supply inventory to authorized accountable employees. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

Recommendation 35: Embassy Tallinn should establish procedures whereby someone other than the accountable employee conducts the annual inventory of expendable supplies. (Action: Embassy Tallinn)

PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS

Title	Name	Arrival Date
Chiefs of Mission:		
Ambassador	Jeffrey D. Levine	09/2012
Deputy Chief of Mission	Chever X. Voltmer	08/2013
Chiefs of Sections:		
Management	Ila S. Jurisson	09/2014
Consular	Lisa T. Cross	09/2014
Political	Lee. R. Brown	08/2014
Economic	Brett A. Makens	08/2012
Public Affairs	Bradley A. Hurst	07/2014
Regional Security	James W. Harvey	04/2014
Other Agencies:		
Department of Defense	Geoffrey Wright	05/2012
Office of Defense Cooperation	William S. McNicol	
Federal Bureau of Investigation	Michael G. Shanahan	10/2013
U.S. Secret Service	Vincent A. Tutoni	09/2014

Source: Embassy Tallinn, Estonia.

APPENDIX A: SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

This inspection was conducted in accordance with the Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation, as issued in 2012 by the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency, and the Inspector's Handbook, as issued by OIG for the Department and the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG).

Purpose and Scope

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

- **Policy Implementation:** whether policy goals are being effectively achieved and U.S. interests are effectively represented.
- **Resource Management:** whether resources are used with maximum efficiency and effectiveness and whether financial transactions and accounts are properly conducted, maintained, and reported.
- **Management Controls:** whether operations meet the requirements of applicable laws and regulations; whether internal management controls are enforced; whether instances of fraud, waste, or abuse exist; and whether adequate steps for detection, correction, and prevention have been taken.

Inspections also assess executive leadership in such areas as security, interagency cooperation, morale, Equal Employment Opportunity, and staff development.

Methodology

The inspection team's primary assessment criteria are regulations contained in the Foreign Affairs Manual and Handbooks, Department instructions, applicable law and generally accepted management principles.

The Office of Inspections solicits reviews of the content of inspection reports from interested offices, individuals, organizations, and activities.

In conducting the inspection, the OIG team reviewed 440 documents; interviewed 123 employees and officials in Washington, D.C., and at Embassy Tallinn; and analyzed the responses to 133 OIG questionnaires.

ABBREVIATIONS

BBG	Broadcasting Board of Governors
DCM	Deputy chief of mission
Department	U.S. Department of State
DOD	U.S. Department of Defense
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunity
FAH	<i>Foreign Affairs Handbook</i>
FAM	<i>Foreign Affairs Manual</i>
FAST	First- and second-tour
GSO	General services officer
ICASS	International Cooperative Administrative Support Services
ISSO	Information systems security officer
LE	Locally employed
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OBO	Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations
OIG	Office of Inspector General

INSPECTION TEAM MEMBERS

Ambassador Marianne Myles (team leader)

Iris Rosenfeld (deputy team leader)

Mark Jeleniewicz

Tracey Keiter

Monica O'Keefe

Matthew Ragnetti

Lavon Sajona

Steven White

Colwell Whitney

Joyce Wong

Roman Zawada



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