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

Report of Inspection

The Florida Regional Center
Fort Lauderdale, Florida

Report Number ISP-I-07-50, September 2007

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- The Florida Regional Center (FRC) is a collection of offices from five bureaus and the U.S. Marine Corps that support embassies and consulates throughout the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs (WHA) region. These tenant offices colocated at the FRC are extensions of their parent bureaus located in Washington, DC. Each office is responsible for administering most aspects of its own operations. There are no mechanisms in place to promote synergy among the tenant offices.
- The Acting Director of the FRC and the WHA staff in Ft. Lauderdale are effectively supporting regionalization. The FRC management team has the capacity to supervise additional regional staff, and the FRC building has space that can be remodeled to accommodate additional offices. A needs survey and a space management survey should be conducted before any construction or remodeling is considered, as recommended later in this report.
- The FRC is a key component in carrying out the Department's regionalization and rightsizing policies but has not developed and implemented a system for measuring the effectiveness of its programs. Performance measurement is a key requirement of the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993.¹ Without performance data, some important decisions relating to the future expansion of FRC may be made based on assumptions rather than fact.
- Through rightsizing and regionalization WHA eliminated six direct-hire positions at overseas posts. This action improved security by reducing the U.S. presence abroad and resulted in annual savings of approximately \$2 million.
- The FRC security program operates without the benefit of formal standards. The Bureau of Diplomatic Security's (DS) Office of Domestic Facilities Protection should develop specific domestic security standards for the FRC to bring it into line with other Department of State (Department) operations in the United States.

The inspection took place in Washington, DC, between April 16 and May 12, 2007, and in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, between May 31 and June 15, 2007. Ambassador Morris N. Hughes, Jr. (team leader), Dr. Louis A. McCall (deputy team leader), Eric Chavera, Ralph Kwong, Gwendolyn Llewellyn, Michael Lynch, and Timothy

¹ PL 103-62.

Wildy conducted the inspection. The scope of this inspection was limited to WHA's FRC in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. The Office of Inspector General (OIG) team did not inspect FRC tenant elements that were not answerable to WHA.

Before regional service centers were established, the Department tended to service smaller posts that lacked a full complement of administrative support by using a partnering model in which officers at larger posts in the region provided support to smaller posts. Some positions were also designated as “regional” such that an officer accredited to one post was the primary service provider of his or her function at the mother post but also serviced smaller surrounding posts. De facto mini-service hubs came into being at larger posts that had the size to accommodate an array of such officers and the air connections to make such support feasible. That model is still in use to some extent in WHA.

The FRC is a forward deployed office under the direction of WHA. It began in 1988 as the Miami Regional Center located in South Miami, Florida. When its original facility was heavily damaged in August 1992 by Hurricane Andrew, the FRC was relocated to Fort Lauderdale in a building that formerly belonged to Bell South. Because the building is now owned by the Department, the Bureau of Administration is responsible for the facility. The FRC is unique in that it is the Department’s only domestically based regional center. South Florida is a major air transportation hub for the Caribbean and Latin America. The proximity of the Ft. Lauderdale and Miami airports to the WHA area of operation enables the FRC to provide timely support services at less cost than would be incurred by basing staff abroad or in Washington.

In 2002, the President’s Management Agenda called for reconfiguring the “U.S. Government overseas staff allocation to the minimum necessary to meet U.S. foreign policy goals” seeing regional centers as a tool or model.² In recent years, the Department has looked to regional service centers, and a domestic center in particular, as tools to enable the delivery of support functions. Regionalization will help to rightsize overseas posts with cost savings, greater expertise, and reduced exposure to security risks.

Over time, the mix in terms of Department offices operating from the Miami Regional Center, and then its successor FRC in Ft. Lauderdale, changed in number and size of component elements. In 1998, Canada was transferred from the then

² The President’s Management Agenda, Fiscal Year 2002, Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget.

named Bureau of European Affairs to WHA, and Canadian posts were added to those serviced by FRC. There was a major expansion in 1994. At present, there are 102 employees at the FRC of whom 86 are direct-hire employees. Only 29 positions belong to WHA.

In all, there are five bureaus represented at the FRC. Those bureaus are WHA, the Bureau of Administration, DS, Bureau of Information Resource Management, and the Office of Medical Services. In addition, the U.S. Marine Security Guard Battalion has two companies headquartered at the FRC. The WHA element of the FRC is an extension of the bureau's Office of the Executive Director (WHA/EX) and provides limited logistical and administrative support to colocated tenants. Because WHA has no programmatic oversight of the other offices at FRC, each tenant office reports directly to its own bureau in Washington. Loosely bound by a patchwork of disparate memorandums of agreement, FRC has evolved into a hotel-like arrangement of convenience where occupants see each other and are near each other, but otherwise have little in common. The WHA component of the FRC, in this metaphor, functions as the concierge with the other elements being autonomous actors. In addition to providing support services for the FRC platform, the WHA component, together with the other tenant offices, provides direct support either through actual visits or remote virtual visits to posts in the region, plus limited support to Hamilton, Bermuda, a post that is part of the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs.

The FRC has a total operating budget, not counting salaries, of approximately \$5.4 million. Sixty-one posts are supported by the FRC through a combination of visits and remotely delivered services enabled by web-based applications, e-mail, digital videoconferences, and the telephone. Another seven domestic locations, including San Juan, Puerto Rico, received technical communications support from FRC. Twenty-seven posts in Africa, Europe, Asia, South Asia, the Middle East, and Oceania have used the FRC for medical evacuations (MEDEVAC) and for remote assistance from the Regional Information Management Center (RIMC) (see Appendix A).³ The regional medical officer and his staff at FRC are assigned to WHA.

FRC is now listed as a regional center of excellence by the Office of Global Support Services and Innovation.⁴ A center of excellence is a geographic or organiza-

³ In 2004, WHA and RIMC had an amicable "divorce" by way of a memorandum of agreement that delineates their separate responsibilities while colocated at FRC. The new arrangement provides greater autonomy to RIMC, which had always answered operationally to the Bureau of Information Resource Management, although its staff at the RFC was previously assigned to WHA.

⁴ See Department's Internet web page <http://rightsizing.state.gov/>

tional group with an acknowledged technical, business, or competitive competency.⁵ Currently, there is a pending merger of the Office of Global Support Services and Innovation with the Office of Rightsizing the U.S. Government Presence Overseas, and the Office of Management Policy.

⁵Definition of a center of excellence provided in the Intranet resource “Diplopedia: The Encyclopedia of the Department of State.”

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The Acting Director of the FRC and the staff in Ft. Lauderdale are effectively supporting regionalization, and the morale of staff is high. The FRC management team has the capacity to supervise additional regional staff, and the FRC building has space that can be remodeled to accommodate additional offices. A needs survey and a space management survey should be conducted before any construction or remodeling is considered. This is the subject of a formal recommendation later in the report.

The FRC is a collection of five bureaus and the U.S. Marine Corps that provide support for embassies and consulates throughout the WHA region. It is an organization like no other in the Foreign Service. There is no chief of mission or Assistant Secretary whose authority applies to all. There is no management office or executive office to provide uniform support and enforce standards such as assignment of an Equal Employment Opportunity officer. WHA/EX is in charge of the FRC and oversees its operation through a senior officer assigned as Director. It is more a title than a reality as the majority of the occupants of the FRC are regional representatives of bureaus that do not answer to WHA, much less to the FRC director. Collaboration leading to the reaping of synergies is not the norm. Sometimes the FRC can help tenant agencies, as it does with visa and passport applications. Sometimes it cannot, as when asked for assistance with human resource issues or financial management matters.

In terms of synergy, WHA does not have an effective mechanism that addresses management issues that have cross-bureau implications. The FRC staff rarely communicates with other FRC sections about management issues that impact some or all serviced posts. Each section's mission is very narrowly focused on carrying out the specific mission of its parent bureau. For this to change, the Department will have to update and revise its policies and guidance. Because all Department entities present at the FRC that are not part of WHA (DS, Bureau of Information Resource Management, Office of Medical Services, and Bureau of Administration's Office of the Procurement Executive) report to the Under Secretary for Management, one possible solution would be for the Under Secretary for Management to direct functional bureau personnel assigned to the FRC to report to the FRC director. In addition, the cost of FRC regional positions are borne by each bureau rather than by all serviced agencies based on some type of cost distribution system similar to International Cooperative Administrative Support Services. The OIG team believes that a

full treatment of rightsizing and regionalization issues, as they relate to regional centers, are beyond the scope of this inspection and should be addressed in a separate report. A previous OIG report did address rightsizing issues in a broader context, finding the regional support centers generally function as cost-effective service providers but highlighted the need for a Department-wide master plan and pointed out instances of inadequate coordination⁶



The OIG team found anomalies for which there may not be a ready solution. For example, the uniformed guards at the FRC fall under a general contract for guard service that is managed by DS. The chain of command for the guards is to DS in Washington and not through the post security officer at the FRC. Maintenance contracts for the FRC building are awarded by the Bureau of Administration in Washington. There is no contracting officer's representative (COR) in Ft. Lauderdale. Some maintenance contracts require that services be provided from Washington. Regional staff posted at the FRC who have expertise in various engineering fields are not permitted to repair a broken lock or a door, for example, because of contractual arrangements made in Washington.

There are important internal management issues that can be reviewed by WHA, DS, and the Bureau of Administration, which are addressed in later sections of this report. These issues aside, the FRC is performing a valuable regional support function at a net savings to the Department. Through rightsizing and regionalization, WHA eliminated six direct-hire positions at overseas posts. This action improved security by reducing the U.S. presence abroad and resulted in annual savings of approximately \$2 million. The Department realizes additional savings when one domestically based regional support position replaces more than one American position in the field and still allows for growth at a serviced post without degrading administrative support.

The benefits and limits of regionalized administrative support world-wide are analyzed in a U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) report issued in May

⁶ Rightsizing the U.S. Government Presence Overseas: A Progress Report, Memorandum Report ISP-I-06-11, December 2005.

2006.⁷ The GAO report concludes that there should be better cost analyses and performance measures to demonstrate the full potential of remote administrative support for overseas posts. Nevertheless, the report supports rightsizing through regionalization.

Although not strictly a part of the inspection, the idea of expanding regional coverage to include functions other than administrative support flows logically from the success of the FRC and the potential for growth at the center. The Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs may make a request to establish a regional support office at the FRC. WHA is reviewing options to create a regional public diplomacy officer position at the FRC. These ideas fit well with the President's emphasis on the importance of safety, efficiency, and accountability in U.S. government staffing overseas. Moving functions from overseas to regional centers in the United States is one of the elements of rightsizing that supports the President's Management Agenda.

⁷ "Overseas Presence: Cost Analyses and Performance Measures Are Needed to Demonstrate the Full Potential of Providing Embassy Support Remotely," U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-06-479, May 2006.

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REGIONAL HUMAN RESOURCES

Five regional human resource officers provide effective human resources services to 16 WHA posts. Each regional human resource officer generally covers a portfolio of three to four posts. Nine posts surveyed gave FRC high scores on the category of “overall human resources support.” These posts also gave high scores on the “number and frequency of visits of human resources support visits.” One post scored both of these categories as average. Six posts did not respond to OIG’s customer satisfaction survey.

A memorandum of agreement outlines the relationship between the FRC and each post. Typically, regional personnel officers visit each post six times a year for about one week. Occasionally, based on workload considerations, regional human resources officers may modify the number of visits. While not at posts, regional human resources officers support posts remotely at the FRC. E-mail, facsimiles, digital videoconferencing, and personal digital assistants are used to stay in touch. Officers can access post records and files at posts and at the FRC through OpenNet, the Department’s internal, Intranet system.

The FRC plans to expand regional human resources support in FYs 2008 and 2009. Two additional regional human resources officers will be added to the staff. With the additional staff, FRC will be able to expand its coverage to include 21 posts: in Central America (7), the Caribbean (8), South America (5), and Bermuda, which is a Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs post. Regional human resources coverage is also being piloted for four other posts: Santiago, Montevideo, Asuncion, and Buenos Aires.

As a result of regionalization, WHA eliminated three overseas direct-hire American human resources officer positions, achieving annual cost savings of \$505,000 per position eliminated⁸, for a total annual cost savings of approximately \$1.5 million.

⁸ The figure of \$505,000 was provided by the Bureau of Resource Management to the Office of Management and Budget for use in preparing the Budget of the United States Government, Fiscal Year 2008. GAO used a smaller figure of \$393,000 in a 2006 report that may have differed in terms of the elements that were included in the computation. According to GAO-06-479, May 2006, p. 21, “This amount includes salary, benefits, and support costs plus a number of costs that apply only to officials overseas, such as housing allowances; educational allowances for their children; and additional pay, such as danger pay, depending on which region of the world the officer is located. It also includes costs for providing a secure building for the officers to work in overseas.”

This was done without increasing the number of regional human resource officers at the FRC. Additional cost savings of \$325,000 per position will be realized when two overseas regional human resources officer positions are reprogrammed to the FRC. FRC estimates the cost of supporting one regional position domestically to be about \$180,000 rather than \$505,000 to support a position overseas. The two positions to be reprogrammed to the FRC in FY 2007 and 2008 will yield cost savings of about \$325,000 per position based on FRC's analysis of regional coverage at the FRC versus regional coverage from a mini-hub at a large post in the region.

REGIONAL FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Two regional financial management officers provide effective financial management services to seven posts: Nassau, Curaçao, Paramaribo, Georgetown, Port of Spain, Belmopan, and Kingston. Four posts gave high scores to the overall financial management support category in the OIG customer satisfaction survey. One post rated it as fair, while two posts did not respond to the survey. Five posts gave high marks on a question about the number and frequency of financial management support visits. A third financial management officer will be added to the FRC staff in the summer of 2007. This additional officer will service Georgetown, consult with Port-au-Prince and USINT Havana, and oversee the FRC's own financial management operations. Memorandums of agreement (MOAs) with serviced posts govern the length and type of support that regional financial management officers provide.

The addition of one regional financial management officer will not result in additional position savings abroad, although one financial position was previously eliminated through regionalization. By focusing on Kingston, the new position will free the other two financial management officers to support the six posts that are too small to have resident direct-hire financial management officers. The average size of these financial management sections is four local hires. The average budget for all allotments managed by these smaller posts is about \$2.6 million.

TRAINING

The FRC has a program that makes courses available at its Fort Lauderdale facility, at adjacent or nearby posts, or at individual posts if it has sufficient students. The FRC offers a wide range of courses that include job-specific subjects, as well as leadership and management. Instructors from the Foreign Service Institute (FSI), other bureaus, and outside contractors present some courses. FRC has developed a

group of facilitators who are American direct-hire employees and local staff member from 20 different posts. They are certified to facilitate courses that focus on developing local staff leadership and management skills. This is a successful program that is closely linked to the Department priority to empower local staff. The train-the-trainer approach significantly reduces training costs, makes training available to a large segment of local staffs, and builds a cadre of local staff leaders and managers at every post. The program also standardizes local staff leadership and management training within the geographic region. Most importantly, it is a key enabler of the FRC regionalization strategy, which envisions increasing regional support from Ft. Lauderdale, decreasing the number of Americans at overseas posts, and relying more and more on empowered local staff supervisors.

The FRC training officer resigned in January 2007, and an employee detailed from FSI is expected to arrive in July 2007 to fill the position. FRC chose this solution in order to develop closer ties to FSI and synchronize the FRC training program with FSI priorities. In the interim, a capable retired annuitant who is familiar with FRC training programs is filling the gap. Nonetheless, current and projected statistics for 2007 show that the overall number of training courses will decrease by 37 percent when compared to 2006. The FRC attributes the decline to the inability of posts to fund participant travel and per diem costs, which caused the cancellation of several courses with insufficient enrollment. Nevertheless, the FRC intends to restore the program to its previous levels in support of Department management initiatives.

The FRC uses an automated system to manage its training program. The dynamic database-driven web site advertises courses, provides online registration, delivers feedback and information to subscribers, assists the FRC training officer with course management tools, and records course evaluation data as a means of quality management and continual improvement. The database and website represent an effective use of technology and automation to improve training capacity.

The FRC is studying other innovations to expand its training program with existing resources. One idea is to train eligible family members to be trainers. This would provide eligible family members with portable skills that would improve their employment opportunities overseas. It would also give posts the alternative of training staff and avoid travel costs to Washington or to regional training centers.

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This report addresses primarily WHA/FRC's internal management operations, which are limited in scope, but satisfactory to the tenants at the FRC. Functional bureau elements located at the FRC operate as extensions of their parent bureaus located in Washington, DC. Each bureau office within the FRC is responsible for administering most aspects of its own operations. Administrative support agreements between WHA/FRC and each functional bureau identify specific general services, financial, human resources, and information technology services that will be provided to each bureau or agency. Agreements vary in degrees of support offered to and provided by each bureau and agency. The OIG team formally recommended that administrative support agreements between the FRC and other bureaus' representatives at the center be updated to reflect more accurately what FRC managers can do and what the serviced units must expect to do for themselves. (See the Management Controls section of this report.)

Department of State Bureau	Office	Foreign Service	Civil Service	Other Staff	Total Staff	Budget Resources
Western Hemisphere Affairs	Florida Regional Center	26	3	0	29	\$1,373,000
Administration	Regional Procurement Support Office	0	5	0	5	\$653,000
Administration	Facilities Management Services	0	1	0	1	\$381,976
Information Resource Management	Information Management Center	29	0	0	29	\$566,858
Diplomatic Security	Security Engineering Services	9	0	0	9	\$207,673
Diplomatic Security	Diplomatic Courier Service	10	0	0	10	\$2,220,000
Medical Director	Office of Medical Services	2	1	0	3	\$0
	Subtotal (Department of State)	76	10	0	86	\$5,402,507

Department of Defense						
	Marine Security Guards	0	0	16	16	\$374,000
	Total	76	10	16	102	\$5,776,507

Source: FRC

* Budget figures do not include U.S. direct-hire salaries.

HUMAN RESOURCES

FRC's regional human resources officers provide limited support to in-house American personnel. FRC is in the process of taking steps, including building a website, to improve prearrival communications with new staff, some of whom raised that issue as the one unpleasant surprise encountered in transferring duty stations. Human resources duties are limited to answering general personnel-related questions, orientation, in-processing of personnel, and handling passport and visa issues. Complex and time-consuming personnel issues are appropriately referred back to the individual sections at the FRC for them to work out with their parent bureau.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

FRC employs a part-time Civil Service employee to manage a \$1.3 million allotment. About \$1 million of this amount is used to fund overseas travel. The remainder is used to fund the salaries of contract personnel and other administrative costs. FRC also assists with the allotments of the Marine companies and the diplomatic couriers. The Charleston Financial Service Center is responsible for certifying all vouchers. A new regional financial management officer position will provide some additional financial management support to the FRC.

GENERAL SERVICES

A contract logistician provides motor vehicle, property management, and expendable supplies services to FRC under the supervision of the acting director. At the time of the inspection, the logistician had been on duty only six months and had

limited training in processes, procedures, and automated tools. Notwithstanding these challenges, he displayed a fair amount of job knowledge and a good deal of enthusiasm.

Motor pool assets consist of five self-drive vehicles that are used by all tenant offices. The Engineering Services Office funds three vehicles, while FRC and RIMC fund one each. The logistician is responsible for inputting mileage data via a web interface with the General Services Administration's online Mileage Express system. He coordinates scheduled maintenance. Vehicle operators use the OF 108 form to record daily usage information and mileage, but some drivers do not enter all required data. The OIG team advised FRC to enforce the use of form OF 108. Operators refuel vehicles at commercial filling stations using a credit card that is kept with each vehicle's logbook. The logistician has access to fuel information that allows him to check data on each transaction. During the OIG visit, the tenant offices reached agreement on a formal vehicle use policy that outlines responsibilities and defines procedures. This will improve management controls.

Property management is by and large decentralized. Tenant offices maintain their own program equipment. WHA provides information management equipment to all tenants under the Department's Global Information Technology Modernization Program. The FRC logistician uses the Department's Integrated Logistics Management System (ILMS) to maintain accountability of property for which he is responsible. Tenants share a 10,000 square foot warehouse that includes storage and workshop spaces. Each office maintains its own designated storage area. Some offices have fenced off their inventories to restrict access; others have not. Many items appear to be unneeded, such as an oversized safe that has gone unclaimed for several years.

The annual inventory was due to the Department on March 15, 2007, as required by 14 FAM 429.1. FRC was granted an extension until July 1, 2007. An OIG team member performed a spot check of nonexpendable property, and the logistician could not locate some items that were listed in the ILMS inventory. The annual inventory provides an opportunity to verify and locate all items listed in the ILMS records. It also should serve to identify items for disposal.



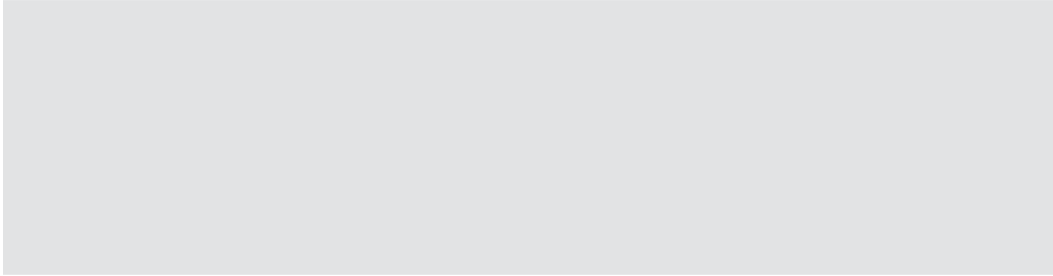
The FRC provides expendable supplies, at no charge, to all tenant offices, except the Regional Procurement Support Office (RPSO), which supplies itself. The contract logistician uses the Department's Post Administrative Software Suite Stock Control application to manage expendable supplies inventory and distribution. The spot check conducted by the OIG team indicated that stock levels matched the records, and adequate management controls were in place.

A government purchase card fulfills most of the FRC's procurement needs. The office management specialist in the front office is the primary cardholder. She has a one-time purchase limit of \$3,000, and a total monthly limit of \$50,000. Since assuming the responsibility in March 2007, she has averaged only two purchases per month. At the time of the OIG inspection, a second employee was in training as a backup to the primary cardholder. The FRC relies on the colocated RPSO for acquisitions that exceed the purchase card limit but pays a six percent service surcharge. This is not in keeping with the 1992 MOA between the Miami Regional Center and RPSO, which exempts the FRC from the service charge. In FY 2006, RPSO processed orders for FRC totaling almost \$417,000, for which FRC paid almost \$20,000 in surcharge fees. The FY 2007 figures, as of May 2007, are significantly lower at about \$52,000 in purchases and \$2,900 in surcharges. The OIG team is recommending that all MOAs be reviewed and reissued.

FACILITIES

The Bureau of Administration maintains the FRC facility under a February 1996 MOA. The direct-hire facility manager is augmented by a contract maintenance supervisor and two contract janitors. WHA/EX foresees the growth of the FRC staff and believes that the facility as currently configured cannot accommodate more personnel. At the request of WHA, the General Services Administration (GSA) conducted, in March 2007, a survey to determine the feasibility of expanding the facility. The GSA survey described two proposals. The first envisioned the construction of an additional story onto the existing structure, which would require vacating the building for the duration of the construction. The second involved building a separate and adjacent facility over the existing parking area. Neither proposal was expected to exceed the threshold of \$2.5 million, above which Congressional approval is required. GSA expects the Department to fund the full project cost. A third option, though not addressed in the GSA survey, is to make better use of existing space to accommodate additional employees. WHA/EX now appears inclined towards the third option. On May 18, 2007, WHA/EX requested the Bureau of Administration to conduct a space utilization survey of FRC, with an expected determination that

the facility is not optimally utilizing available space. WHA anticipates “demand in the near future to station additional State or even other agency personnel at FRC.” However, neither WHA nor the Department has quantified the amount and functional type of space required.



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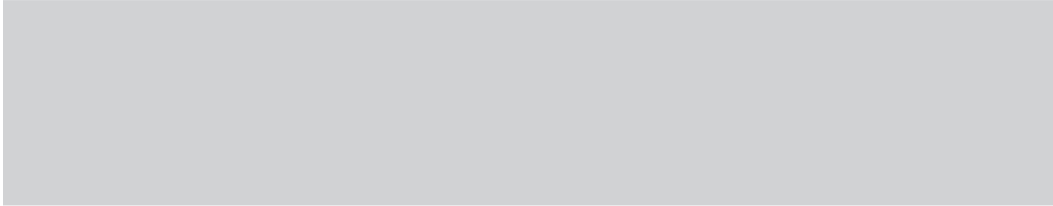
The FRC has made some recent improvements in management controls. In 2007, it began issuing management notices after a hiatus of several years. It is developing a template MOA that may serve as a basis for agreements with all tenant offices. It has begun to focus on documenting processes and procedures, such as for the use of official vehicles, for example. The FRC management staff continues to improve internal controls, but there is work to be done to tighten programmatic management controls and bring them into line with the Office of Management and Budget Circular A-123, specifically to monitor achievement of intended results; proper use of resources; protection from waste, fraud and mismanagement; legal and regulatory compliance; and decisionmaking based on reliable and timely information. Improved management controls could help the FRC's valuable programs play an even greater role in helping to fulfill the Department's management initiatives vis-à-vis regionalization, rightsizing, shared services, and process standardization.

MEMORANDA OF AGREEMENT

The tenant offices collocated in Fort Lauderdale provide some services to one another. MOAs dating back to 1992 define the relationships between WHA and each of the various bureaus and offices represented in Fort Lauderdale. The MOAs for the most part are outdated, inaccurate, and not completely observed. They result in miscommunication, uneven expectations, and contradiction between agreed policy and action. FRC is providing, at no charge, office furniture and equipment, telephone services, and expendable supplies to two collocated U.S. Marine Corps regional headquarters. The MOA between the Department and the U.S. Marine Corps requires reimbursement for these services. A perceived renegeing of a provision in the FRC - RIMC MOA caused some hard feelings. WHA/FRC has developed a draft document that may serve as a template for updated MOAs. A service matrix that describes each service, standards of performance, and evaluation criteria would be more effective in defining relationships and determining performance.

The FRC also has concluded MOAs with the posts that are serviced by the FRC's regional human resources and financial management officers. These MOAs need to define more clearly both standards of performance and evaluation criteria. Exist-

ing MOAs with serviced posts date to August 2005 and include a requirement for an annual review. Those reviews have not been done. The WHA staff at the FRC is in the preparatory stages of renewing MOAs with client posts.



REGIONALIZATION

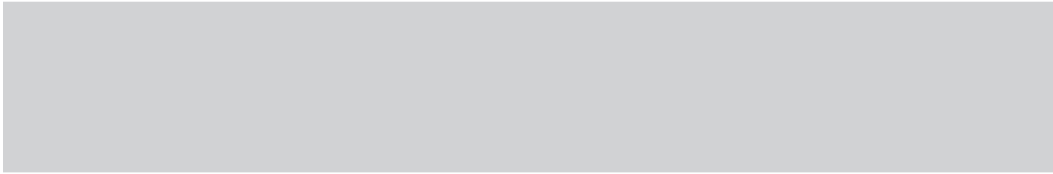
The Under Secretary for Management has identified regionalization as a key initiative to improve efficiency and reform management processes. The FRC is a major player in implementing programs that support increased regionalization. Its most prominent program involves regional human resources and financial management officers who support several posts, each as full-fledged members of the posts' management team. This approach to regional support holds promise in the global effort to reduce the diplomatic footprint and security profile overseas. However, there is a need for "systematic performance measures and feedback mechanisms...to measure the quality of and satisfaction with remote support."⁹ Although the FRC did a global survey of customer satisfaction in 2005, it relies primarily on anecdotal information that is neither aggregated nor analyzed to determine service quality and satisfaction. Currently, the only regular feedback is in the form of input into the performance evaluations of FRC rover and regional officers. Performance measurement is a key requirement of the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993. Without performance data, some important decisions relating to the future expansion of FRC may be made based on assumptions rather than fact.



⁹ "Overseas Presence: Cost Analyses and Performance Measures Are Needed to Demonstrate the Full Potential of Providing Embassy Support Remotely," U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-06-479, May 2006, p. 30.

TRAVEL

The FRC regional and rover officers travel most of the year. Two office management specialists share responsibilities for providing travel support, but there are no written standard operating procedures. Both office management specialists will depart their positions in summer 2007. It is an opportune time to develop and implement a written standard operating procedures governing travel.



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The information management (IM) section provides adequate support to 102 employees at the FRC. The staff follows most Department information management and security policies and guidelines, and provides sufficient support to their customers. To improve information management and security operations, there are several areas that require improvement.

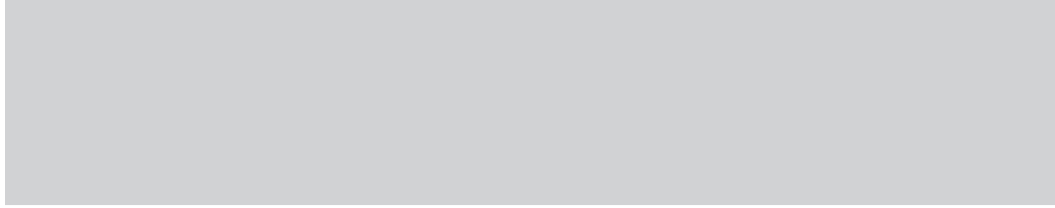
The information management officer (IMO) oversees the information programs center and information systems center (ISC), which include managing and securing the Department's OpenNet Plus and ClassNet networks, as well as a Blackberry Enterprise Server program. The IMO facilitates a pilot IMO Rover program that provides quarterly support to two posts (Hamilton, Bermuda, and Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles) that have no American IM staff. The IMO oversees an information management specialist (IMS) rover program that provides support to 50 posts within WHA. In addition to his IM responsibilities, the IMO is acting deputy director and post security officer for the FRC.

The information systems officer (ISO) manages the day-to-day operations of the ISC with the support of one senior IMS and two Civil Service information technology (IT) specialists. The ISC staff manages the unclassified network of 172 workstations and 11 servers. The information programs officer supervises one IMS. Together they provide pouch services and network support to approximately 100 classified workstations and six servers.

SYSTEMS DOCUMENTATION

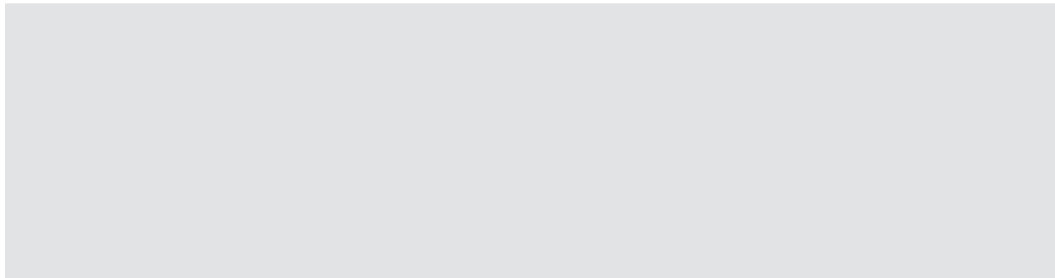
The FRC does not have the current systems documentation, as required by 5 FAM and 12 FAM. Specifically, FRC does not have updated versions of the following documentation: 1) contingency plans to address the continuity of operations and recovery from adverse conditions; 2) a system security plan detailing the section's approach to security requirements and protecting information technology resources; 3) annual self-assessments for the section's computer networks; and 4) configuration management plans that verify that the computer networks maintain the correct secu-

rity configuration and that changes are reviewed. The lack of updated documentation leaves FRC's information systems vulnerable to a variety of disruptions, ranging from mild problems, such as short-term power outage, to severe problems, such as equipment disruption or fire.



REGIONAL INFORMATION MANAGEMENT CENTER INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT SERVICES

The FRC provides IT support services to the RIMC in Fort Lauderdale; however, the MOA between both parties has not been reviewed and updated since February 2004, and is out of date. The document does not detail the level of support currently provided, nor has it been approved by post management officials. Without a current MOA, confusion could arise regarding support functions and who is the responsible party for each function.



INFORMATION SYSTEMS SECURITY OFFICER INTERNAL CONTROLS WEAKNESS

Information systems security officer (ISSO) functions are not appropriately separated at FRC as required by 2 FAM 020. A cable dated May 3, 2007, designates the IT specialist who manages the Sensitive But Unclassified network as the ISSO for both the classified and Sensitive But Unclassified networks, and the regional computer security officer as the alternate ISSO for both networks.¹⁰ The individual that manages the system cannot also be the individual that polices the system. IM management was under the impression that ISSO duties can only be performed by an individual who has taken the ISSO training course or completed a refresher ISSO course. The senior IMS has already attended the ISSO training and was previously assigned as the ISSO at an overseas post. To appropriately separate control, the senior IMS could be designated the ISSO for the Sensitive But Unclassified network, and then the IT specialist can be the ISSO for the classified network.



Tracking of Help Desk Service Calls

The help desk does not assign and resolve service calls effectively, because there are not well-defined procedures for service calls. The help desk is staffed with three technicians who are responsible for answering service calls, noting the problem in a tracking database, and resolving the issue either by troubleshooting or by transferring the issue to more experienced technicians. The tracking database used by the help desk was developed by systems staff at Embassy Hanoi, Vietnam. The tracking database creates reports and tracks the service provided by the help desk, but does not notify the help desk when a ticket has been created. As a result, the help desk is not annotating service calls on a regular basis. With the lack of standard operating procedures for the tracking database, the help desk is not resolving service calls in a timely manner, and technicians are confused about who is handling each trouble ticket.

¹⁰ Ft. Lauderdale 0440.



Local Information Technology Change Control Board

The FRC has not established a local IT change control board as required by 5 FAM 862. The IMO, information programs officer, and ISO have consulted informally, in the past, to determine what software could be added to the system, but there are no records of those discussions. No formal decisions were made or forwarded to the Bureau of Information Resource Management, as specified in 5 FAM 862.3. There have been instances when a local change control board should have been used. Without a formal process, there is potential that a product could adversely impact FRC's networks or the Department's IT infrastructure.



Professional Development

The IM staff had not developed and completed individual development plans. According to 5 FAM 121, the information programs officer and ISO are responsible for developing individual training plans for their staff. Post IM staff members have not had sufficient training to ensure that their knowledge and skills are current. Without continuous technical and management training, the IM staff would not be able to keep their knowledge and skills up to date in a time of IT change.



Cellular Phone Program

The FRC does not adequately manage its inventory of cellular phones, nor does it have a policy for their use. According to 5 FAM 526.1, each bureau, post, or office is required to have a cellular phone policy outlining their allocation and rules of usage, including personal use. The FRC has an informal understanding on phone usage, but it is unclear whether all personnel who have been issued cellular phones have valid work-related needs. FRC's process for billing personal calls is handled informally. The lack of formal policies and procedures prevents the FRC from holding staff accountable for personal or improper usage of phones. The FRC does not have adequate inventory controls for cellular phones. Inadequate policies and oversight for the cellular phone program may lead to unnecessary costs to the Department.



File Storage on Networks

OIG conducted a search for nonwork-related digital media and identified an excessive amount of digital media files on the server. Although some items were official (pictures of representational events, self-help projects) a significant amount of the total was unofficial, personal digital media being stored in network servers. These files take up significant amounts of storage on the servers and result in increased backup and retrieval times, as well as additional costs to the government. Personal use of U.S. government computers is prohibited if it results in additional expense to the government as stated in 5 FAM 723(6)(a). Storing and backing up nonwork related digital media results in additional government expense. OIG made an informal recommendation on this issue.

Inventory of Equipment

The IM section's nonexpendable property inventory is not complete in the Department's Worldwide Property Accountability System (WPAS) application. According to the cable 06 STATE 8942, all posts are required to complete an annual inventory of nonexpendable property in WPAS, even though the Department plans

to replace WPAS with two integrated applications in the near future. The IM office's lack of an inventory in the WPAS system is contributing to a global discrepancy in the Department's property management program.

The OIG team addressed this issue in an informal recommendation.



An experienced information management officer, acting as deputy director, is the FRC's principal unit security officer (PUSO). As PUSO, he is responsible for the implementation of FRC's security program. Technical security support to FRC is provided by the Bureau of Diplomatic Security's Office of Domestic Management and Engineering Branch, located in Washington, DC.

The FRC staff's primary security concerns include the lack of approved domestic security standards for the FRC and a clear designation of security responsibilities for FRC personnel. The Department does not have approved security standards that apply to domestic facilities, such as the FRC. Better communication with DS in Washington would also enhance the security program at the FRC.

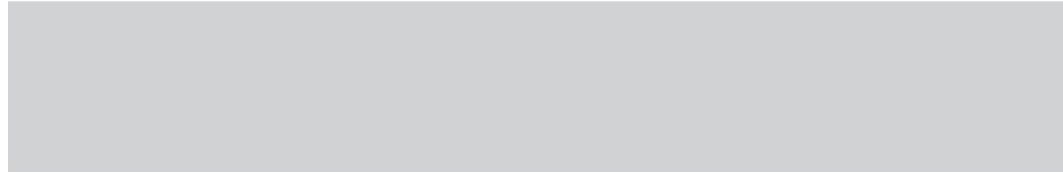
DOMESTIC SECURITY STANDARDS

In 1995, as a result of the Oklahoma City bombing, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) conducted a security vulnerability assessment of domestic government facilities.¹¹ This assessment categorized domestic facilities by the number of employees, building size, and extent of public contact.

However, based on its low level of public contact, it more closely matches a level I facility. Although the facility meets the minimum DOJ physical security standards for both level I and level II facilities, the DOJ standards make no provision for facilities that house classified operations. Without security standards that include provisions for classified operations, the security program at FRC cannot be effectively evaluated.

In January 2004, DS implemented proposed interim domestic security standards for a period of 12 months. The intent was to have these proposed standards evaluated, revised, and eventually developed into formal security standards, but this did not happen. As a result, the FRC security program operates without the benefit of formal standards and thus, relies instead on a mix of proposed domestic and current overseas security standards, domestic guard orders, individual initiatives, and the security practices of the individual office components represented at the FRC.

¹¹ *Vulnerability Assessment of Federal Facilities*, June 28, 1995



Some staff members, including the guards, are unclear about the security roles and responsibilities of FRC personnel. For example, guard orders state that the guard supervisor is the site security manager. The term “site security manager” is misleading because it is not a reference to the PUSO, and is a term used to define a person who is overseeing security at new construction projects overseas. Another example is that safe combination change requests are not submitted directly to the PUSO but instead to the facilities manager.

Recommendation 16:

FRC customers generally rated security as good. Security briefings are held on an as-needed basis, usually when new personnel arrive at the FRC. However, interviews with staff indicated that some

Annual refresher training on safeguarding classified information would be beneficial to staff. The OIG team made an informal recommendation to address this issue. (b)
(2)

PROTECTION OF CLASSIFIED INFORMATION

¹² Principal Duties of a Unit Security Officer--A Guidebook, October 2004.

Recommendation 18:

Recommendation 19:

UNIFORMED PROTECTION OFFICERS

The Office of Domestic Facilities Protection in DS oversees a \$38 million contract that provides UPOs for all Department domestic facilities, including the FRC. A team made up of one UPO supervisor and seven UPOs protects the facility. The firm-fixed price contract requires that the uniformed protection officers provide an armed 24-hour deterrent.


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Recommendation 1: The Under Secretary for Management should develop and implement a plan for cooperation and collaboration among Florida Regional Center tenant offices with the objective of providing integrated solutions for policy and program implementation on a regional scale. (Action: M)

Recommendation 2: The Florida Regional Center should conduct its annual inventory to meet Department property management report standards and have Florida Regional Center tenant offices identify unneeded items and dispose of them per Department regulations. (Action: FRC)

Recommendation 3: The Florida Regional Center, in coordination with the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, should develop facilities needs analysis based on current and projected staffing, missions, and functional use that supports their request to the Bureau of Administration to conduct a space utilization survey of the Florida Regional Center. (Action: FRC, in coordination with WHA)

Recommendation 4: The Florida Regional Center should conclude new memoranda of agreement that include service matrices with tenant offices in Fort Lauderdale and with client posts that define services, standards, and metrics by which services will be evaluated. (Action: FRC)

Recommendation 5: The Florida Regional Center should develop and implement a system of performance measures and regular feedback mechanisms that will measure the quality of and satisfaction with the services it provides to posts. (Action: FRC)

Recommendation 6: The Florida Regional Center should develop and implement formal travel management standard operating procedures for Bureau of Western Hemisphere personnel located at the center. (Action: FRC)

Recommendation 7: The Florida Regional Center should complete and regularly update required systems documentation, to include contingency plans, system security plans, self-assessments, and configuration management plans for its networks. (Action: FRC)

Recommendation 8: The Florida Regional Center, in coordination with the Regional Information Management Center, Fort Lauderdale, should update their memorandum of agreement to reflect current information technology support provided and the responsible parties for each support function. The agreement should be approved by all relevant parties. (Action: FRC, in coordination with RIMC Ft. Lauderdale)

Recommendation 9: The Florida Regional Center should designate the senior information management specialist in the information processing center as the information systems security officer for the Sensitive But Unclassified network. (Action: FRC)

Recommendation 10: The Florida Regional Center should develop standard operating procedures for their help desk staff detailing the process to be followed for noting, assigning, and resolving service calls. (Action: FRC)

Recommendation 11: The Florida Regional Center should formally establish a local change control board in accordance with Department regulations. (Action: FRC)

Recommendation 12: The Florida Regional Center should develop an individual development training plan for each information management staff member based on assigned job responsibilities and individual qualifications. (Action: FRC)

Recommendation 13: The Florida Regional Center should establish a formal policy and standard operating procedures for Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs personnel on the proper distribution, control, and use of official cellular phones, create an inventory, and review it regularly. (Action: FRC)

Recommendation 14: The Florida Regional Center should include all applicable information technology nonexpendable property in the Worldwide Property Accountability Systems application. (Action: FRC)

Recommendation 15: The Bureau of Diplomatic Security should develop and promulgate specific domestic security standards for operations at the Florida Regional Center. (Action: DS)

Recommendation 16: The Florida Regional Center should document and implement a policy that clearly distinguishes the security responsibilities and authorities of personnel at the Florida Regional Center. (Action: FRC)

Recommendation 17:

(**<**)

Recommendation 18:

Recommendation 19:

(**<**)

Recommendation 20: The Bureau of Diplomatic Security should establish, at a minimum, monthly communication with the Florida Regional Center to discuss issues or updates with relation to the uniformed protection officer services contract. (Action: DS)

Recommendation 21: The Bureau of Diplomatic Security should work with the contracting company to revise the Florida Regional Center's guard orders to accurately reflect the authorized relationship between the uniformed protection officers and the Florida Regional Center management. (Action: DS)

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Informal recommendations cover operation matters not requiring action by organizations outside of 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.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND INFORMATION SECURITY

OIG found excessive amounts of personal storage of media files on the FRC network. Personal use of U.S. government computers is prohibited if the use results in additional charges to the government as stated in 5 FAM 723(6)(a).

Informal Recommendation 1: The Florida Regional Center should notify its users of the regulations on excessive personal use of Department information resources, take steps to reduce personal storage, and implement size limits of personal drives if necessary.

OIG found an excessive amount of surplus servers, printers, and switches in the frame rooms that need to be removed and returned to the Department.

Informal Recommendation 2: The Florida Regional Center should dispose of and return its surplus information technology equipment.

FRC's web sites are not in compliance with Section 508 requirements, as required by 5 FAM 776.4. The webmaster has been working with the Program for Accessible Computer/Communication Technology to make the websites compliant with requirements so that individuals with disabilities are able to view and use of information on the websites.

Informal Recommendation 3: The Florida Regional Center should ensure that its websites are in compliance with Section 508 requirements.

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Informal Recommendation 5: The Florida Regional Center should develop and publish post-specific procedures to govern the processing and safeguarding of classified information consistent with the Department's published and proposed standards.

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Many Florida residents have permits to carry concealed weapons and would not necessarily know that they could not enter the facility with their concealed weapon. Guard orders state that an individual will have his weapon confiscated and that law enforcement officials will be summoned. This presupposes that the visitor has already committed an offense. Adding a sign stating the policy would prevent confusion.

Informal Recommendation 7: The Florida Regional Center should place a sign on the front door to notify visitors that all weapons, including those carried by permit holders, are prohibited in the building.

The FRC building is suitable as a safe area during a hurricane, but limited emergency supplies are available.

Informal Recommendation 8: The Florida Regional Center should add food items and other emergency supplies to its warehouse supply.

The FRC would benefit from more frequent drills to make certain that staff know what to do in an emergency.

Informal Recommendation 9: The Florida Regional Center should conduct emergencies drills throughout the year.

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	Name	Arrival
Acting Director	Virginia H. Milhous	8/8/06
Chiefs of Sections:		
Information Management	Joseph Smith	7/24/06
Logistics	James Polley	1/22/07
Rover Coordination	Peggy Laurance	8/14/06
Security	Joseph Smith	7/24/06
Training	Vacant	
Directors of Other Bureau Elements:		
Regional Information Management Center	Joseph Devlin	8/7/06
Engineering Services Center	Gordon White	6/19/06
Regional Diplomatic Courier Division	John Smith	9/19/06
Marine Security Guard Battalion		
Region 4	Lt. Col. Marc Lambert	7/15/05
Region 9	Lt. Col. Christopher Miner	6/9/06
Regional Medical Office	Dr. Agu Suvani	9/6/06
Regional Procurement Services Office	Robert Lloyd	1/12/05
Facilities Manager	Charles O'Meara	11/22/98

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COR	Contracting officer representative
Department	Department of State
DOJ	Department of Justice
DS	Bureau of Diplomatic Security
ESC	Engineering Services Center
FRC	Florida Regional Center
FSI	Foreign Service Institute
GAO	Government Accountability Office
GSA	General Services Administration
ILMS	Integrated Logistics Management System
IM	Information management
IMO	Information management officer
IMS	Information management specialist
ISC	Information systems center
ISO	Information systems officer
ISSO	Information systems security officer
IT	Information technology
MEDEVAC	Medical evacuation
MOA	Memorandum of agreement
MRDCD	Miami Regional Diplomatic Courier Division
OIG	Office of Inspector General
PUSO	Principal unit security officer
RIMC	Regional Information Management Center
RPSO	Regional Procurement Support Office
UPO	Uniformed protection officer

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WHA	Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs
WHA/EX	Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, Office of the Executive Director
WPAS	Worldwide Property Accountability System

POST	FRC	FRC ROVER	FRC HR	FRC FM	FRC IPC	FRC TRAIN	FRC FRAT	MSG	COURIER	ESC	RIMC	RPSO	MED
Asuncion	R	V					FRC	V	V		VRT	V	M
Belize City		V	V	V		RT	FRC		V		VRT	V	M
Belmopan	R	V	V	V			O			V	VR	V	M
Bogota		V				RT	FRC	V	V	V	VRT	V	M
Cartagena													M
Brasilia		V				RT		V	V		VRT	R	VM
Recife									V				M
Rio de Janeiro		V						V	V		VRT		M
Sao Paulo		V					O	V	V		VRT		M
Bridgetown	R	V	V			T		V	V	V	VR	R	M
Buenos Aires						RT		V	V		VR		M
Caracas	R					VR	O	V	V	V	VRT	V	M
Curacao	R	V	V	V	V		FRC		V	V	VRT		M
Aruba			V										M
Georgetown	R	V	V	V	VR	T	O		V	V	VRT	V	M
Guatemala City		V						V	V		VRT	R	M
Havana	R	V	VR			VRT		V	V		RT	R	VM
Guantanamo													M
Kingston	R	V	V	V		VRT		V	V	V	VRT	R	VM
La Paz		V				VRT		V	V		VRT	V	M
Cochabamba												V	M
Lima		V				RT		V	V		VRT	V	M
Managua	R	V					FRC	V	V		VRT	V	M
Mexico City		V				RT		V	V	V	VRT	V	VM
Ciudad Juarez							O		V		VRT		VM
Guadalajara		V							V	V	RT		VM
Hermosillo									V	V	VRT		VM
Matamoros		V							V	V	VRT	V	M
Merida		V							V	V	VRT		M
Monterrey		V							V	V	VRT		VM
Nogales										V	VRT	V	VM
Nuevo Laredo									V	V	VRT		M

Source: FRC

Legend: V = Visited post
 R = Remote service
 T = Trainee came to Ft. Lauderdale
 Red symbols indicate the most frequently serviced posts.

O = FRC organized FRAT
 FRC = FRC staff participated in FRAT
 M = MEDEVAC

Diplomatic Courier Service

The Miami Regional Diplomatic Courier Division (MRDCD), with administrative offices at the FRC, is responsible for the secure escort of classified diplomatic material between the Department and U.S. embassies and consulates throughout Central and South America, the Caribbean, and Mexico. MRDCD operates a large classified pouch facility at Miami International Airport, where 11 courier trips originate. MRDCD staffing includes the regional director of Courier Operations, deputy director, a contract secretary, two desk officers, two courier escorts, and seven couriers. A third courier escort is currently on active military duty.

It may be worthwhile for DS to consider consolidating all courier operations at the Miami Airport. As the inspection of the FRC does not include an analysis of courier operations, this report does not include a recommendation on courier consolidation.

Engineering Services Center

The Bureau of Diplomatic Security's Office of Security Technology has an Engineering Services Center (ESC) at the FRC. The mission of the ESC is to protect personnel, facilities, and sensitive information at WHA posts. To fulfill this mission, the ESC provides technical expertise and services to support and enhance the security programs at all posts in the region. With 15 positions, ESC services include the installation and maintenance of intrusion detection, access control, public address, and closed-circuit television systems, as well as X-ray and explosive detection equipment. To facilitate proper handling and storage of classified information, the ESC also installs locks and performs preventive maintenance on safe file containers, vault doors, and document destruction equipment. Other activities include technical countermeasures inspections, information system assessments, and technical/physical security assessments. All services are provided in coordination with regional security officers and or IMOs. The ESC maintains storage, laboratory, and training facilities, and periodically conducts training for the region's security engineering officers, security technical specialists, and Seabees. It also oversees and supports constituent engineering services offices located in San José, San Salvador, Ottawa,

Havana, and Mexico City. The regional director for Security Engineering for WHA is colocated with the ESC. Besides overseeing the operations in Ft. Lauderdale, the regional director for Security Engineering directs the ESC in Montevideo.

Marine Security Guards

The Marine Corps Embassy Security Command has two regional offices, Region 4 and Region 9, based at the FRC. The two regions – no longer called companies – are commanded by lieutenant colonels who oversee the Marines assigned to WHA's 27 Marine security guard detachments. In addition to the commanders, each office includes two commissioned officers, two staff noncommissioned officers, and two noncommissioned officers. Region 4 is made up of 13 detachments in South America, while Region 9 is made up of 14 detachments in Central America, the Caribbean, and Canada.



Courses Offered at the FRC by the FRC¹⁴

FRC Management Conference

Leadership, Education, and Development (LEAD)

Leadership, Education, and Development (LEAD): Train the Trainer

Seven Habits of Highly Effective People

Seven Habits of Highly Effective People: Train the Trainer

Exceptional Customer Service

Protocol Assistant's Workshop

Human Resources Workshop

Courses Conducted at Posts

Leadership, Education, and Development

Seven Habits of Highly Effective People

¹⁴A variety of courses from other bureaus and agencies have also been hosted at FRC.

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