



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

Inspection of Embassy Dushanbe, Tajikistan



Embassy Dushanbe

OIG's inspection of Embassy Dushanbe found that operations were hampered by frequent turnover of American personnel. At the time of the inspection, 65 percent of the Department of State direct-hire Americans had been at post for two months or less. At this medium-sized embassy, there was little depth in any of the units or sections.

The relative inexperience among the American staff was ameliorated by the Ambassador, deputy chief of mission, and chiefs of some other agencies who had been at post for more than a year. The locally employed staff played an ever-more important role in continuity of operations. Not all of them were well trained to carry out those responsibilities.

Physical separation inherent in the design of the new chancery, primarily because of security requirements, engendered a sense of disenfranchisement among locally employed staff who previously interacted more directly with their American supervisors. There was a strong perception of cultural insensitivity by American officers in dealing with local employees. In addition, the locally employed staff believed that Equal Employment Opportunity was not working.

The Ambassador's moratorium on approving National Security Decision Directive-38 requests for additional staff positions for other agencies was well-founded and should continue until the management team is staffed adequately to handle the workload implicit in any such expansion.

A bridge over the Pyanj River (linking Tajikistan and Afghanistan) is one of the most important projects funded by the U.S. government. The bridge opened for limited use on October 27, 2007. Indications were that most traffic initially will flow from Afghanistan into Tajikistan. Movement of illegal substances and persons with mal intent poses a long-range challenge.

Background:



In the aftermath of the 1992-1997 civil war in Tajikistan and perceived security issues following the bombings of U.S. embassies in East Africa, Embassy Dushanbe operations were conducted remotely between 1998 and 2003. During that period American employees assigned to Embassy Dushanbe actually resided in

Almaty, Kazakhstan. They visited Tajikistan intermittently, sometime for only short periods of time. When the nonresident Ambassador or other Americans were not in Dushanbe, the locally employed staff did the work they were authorized and able to perform.

Since 2002, the embassy staff has more than doubled. Overall U.S. program funding – largely drawn from Freedom Support Act allocations – was over \$51 million in FY 2006 and about \$45 million in FY 2007. U.S. policy objectives in Tajikistan are inextricably related to those in neighboring Afghanistan. Unrestricted use of Tajikistani air space to support Operation Enduring Freedom is an important determinant in providing assistance to the host government. Collaboration with the Tajik government to combat the flow of narcotics from Afghanistan serves U.S. long-range interests. Vigilance in thwarting movements of terrorists is likewise an objective to be nurtured.

Office of Inspector General

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