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

Report of Inspection

Limited-Scope Inspection of Embassy Georgetown, Guyana

Report Number ISP-I-08-19, March 2008

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PURPOSE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY OF THE INSPECTION

This inspection was conducted in accordance with the Quality Standards for Inspections, as issued by the President's Council on Integrity and Efficiency, and the Inspector's Handbook, as issued by the Office of Inspector General for the U.S. Department of State (Department) and the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG).

PURPOSE

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

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

METHODOLOGY

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



United States Department of State
and the Broadcasting Board of Governors

Office of Inspector General

PREFACE

This report was prepared by the Office of Inspector General (OIG) pursuant to the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, Section 209 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980, the Arms Control and Disarmament Amendments Act of 1987, and the Department of State and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, FY 1996. It is one of a series of audit, inspection, investigative, and special reports prepared by OIG periodically as part of its oversight responsibility with respect to the Department of State and the Broadcasting Board of Governors to identify and prevent fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement.

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

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

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill Todd", written in a cursive style.

William E. Todd
Acting Inspector General

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- The consular section is staffed by an assortment of Civil Service officers on excursion tours, out-of-cone and entry-level Foreign Service officers, and a consular associate. It is functioning adequately in very difficult circumstances, but is helped by its outreach programs. The nonimmigrant visa (NIV) refusal rate is approximately two-thirds of all applicants. Aggressive anti-fraud measures are required for the large immigrant visa clientele and for American citizenship work. Yet, visa refusals and the section's anti-fraud measures are not a strong negative in U.S.-Guyanese relations.

The inspection took place in Washington, DC, between September 10 and October 3, 2007, at the Florida Regional Center between October 4 and 5, 2007, and in Georgetown, Guyana, between October 9 and 13, 2007. Ambassador Robert E. Barbour (team leader), Dr. Louis A. McCall (deputy team leader), and Boyd Doty conducted the inspection. It was part of a pilot project to determine whether a limited-scope inspection performed by a small team visiting small posts for a short time could adequately evaluate their performance in policy implementation and resource management. The inspection did not include a full review of security or information technology programs. This limited-scope report sets forth the team's observations, informed impressions, findings and recommendations.

CONTEXT

Guyana is a small and poor country. The estimated population is 750,000, and about two percent emigrate every year, primarily to the United States. Emigrants include over 80 percent of those with a high school diploma. It is a population torn apart by ethnic tensions, wracked by criminality, and denied good government. With



gross domestic product now growing at less than half a percent annually, and 20 percent to 50 percent of it controlled by well-placed trans-national criminals, the per capita income is \$990 a year. The NIV refusal rate is above 60 percent. Even so, attitudes toward the United States are positive. A poll done for the U.S. Census Bureau representative in 2007 found that over 80 percent of Guyanese have a favorable view of the United States from where, not incidentally, come remittances of about \$100 million per year from the Guyanese Diaspora. This is Embassy Georgetown's operational environment.

REGIONALIZATION

Embassy Georgetown relies significantly on the FRC and the Charleston Global Financial Services Center. The post has frequent visits from the FRC-based regional financial management officer and the regional human resources officer, as well as the Florida regional assistance teams in the general services area. In addition, the embassy has had visits by the information management rover and temporary duty visits from Washington-based personnel. The Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs's Office of the Executive Director has helped by promoting temporary duty coverage of gaps in several open positions. The Office of Inspector General (OIG) team

encourages visits by other offices to this beleaguered post, such as from the Bureau of Administration, Office of Logistics Management, the Office of the Procurement Executive, and the Bureau of Consular Affairs, Office of the Executive Director.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTION AND POLICY AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

THE EMBASSY'S APPROACH

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A weak and unstable nation not far away that is threatened by ethno-political conflict, deemed a potential narco state wide open to trafficking and terrorism, and whose government lacks or avoids exercising its authority is a danger to the United States, even if not a clear and present one. This informs the embassy's FY 2008 MSP and its six prioritized strategic goals:

- Democracy and human rights
- International crime and drugs
- Social and environmental issues
- Homeland security
- Economic prosperity
- Management and operational excellence

Strategic is the operative word. Aiming its efforts at where the resources are and where results can be counted, the embassy is working hardest in the following specific areas:

- Combating HIV/AIDS
- Promoting exports from agriculture, aquaculture, and forestry
- Fighting visa and consular fraud
- Encouraging democratic practice

Although a lead goal in the MSPs of other U.S. embassies in this region, law enforcement is not singled out in this list of priorities. There are reasons for this: a

foundation of good governance does not exist; there is not yet a resident U.S. government law enforcement agency and, in the framework of an excellent America-Britain-Canada-European Union ambassadorial-level coordinating mechanism, the British have assumed the law enforcement assistance role.

There are advantages of inputs and outputs to the embassy's approach. Input advantages are ambassadorial impetus, program focus, and interagency coordination and cooperation. The Chief of Mission's leadership is exceptional and is welcomed. "He is our cheerleader," one agency head told the OIG team. His support is "110 percent," said another. Therefore, not surprisingly, the OIG team finds that mission objectives are well-articulated and aimed to produce results. All agencies subscribe to them, most through active participation with one or more others. "The MSP was the first document put in my hands when I arrived," one acting agency chief told the OIG team. Peace Corps volunteers help in the U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID) export promotion program; the Military Group, and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) all have big roles in the estimated \$53 million, five-year President's Emergency Program for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), where USAID has the lead. Like PEPFAR, a tie-in with the Ambassador's "Diplomacy through Health" idea, the U.S. Naval Ship Comfort paid a medical assistance visit to Georgetown in 2007. The entire official American community worked under a Military Group control officer on its behalf. The Military Group works with USAID on humanitarian assistance, and so it goes. And, as noted above, the America-Britain-Canada-European Union members coordinate their individual endeavors.

Some farmers, who as part of the export promotion scheme have improved their practices, now grow quantities of export-quality produce and have seen their incomes soar far above the \$800 they were living off of just a few years ago. Just as important for the long term are the bureaucratic barriers that farmers associations have knocked down along the way. These are small steps in the direction of better governance and democratic practice. The number of physicians and other medical personnel with PEPFAR training has gone into the hundreds, the number of Guyanese now being treated by them is in the thousands. Billboards, advertisements, and news stories carry the anti-HIV/AIDS message. The CDC is confident that at the end of the program's five-year authorization, it will have reached its goal of 2,500 life-saving cases.

The obstacles to achievement remain enormous. Corruption is pervasive. A Guyanese money-laundering working group that was created last year has not met since it was inaugurated. Despite much oral encouragement for the project, the government could somehow not find a place for the Drug Enforcement Administra-

sador and the deputy chief of mission. It kept up with major events and covered regional topics believed to be on Washington's agenda, but without a full-time political officer to organize a targeted reporting program, it was not keyed as closely as it should have been to the mission's strategic goals.

PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

Public perceptions of the United States and of Embassy Georgetown initiatives are good, but the embassy program is neither extensive nor well coordinated. With limited resources devoted to public affairs, positive coverage in the print and broadcast media is gratifying in its regularity, breadth of coverage, and attribution. However, communications and outreach are not well coordinated and are hampered by the lack of a full-time public affairs officer (PAO), dedicated public affairs LE staff, any USAID staff dedicated to communications and outreach, or of a strategic communications plan.

In general, media and government of Guyana reactions are positive, but not always. Media coverage and government of Guyana reactions to some U.S. policies, decisions, and requests have been negative, especially to things like the 2007 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report or to high-level visa refusals. On the other hand, a public diplomacy initiative with the consular section has resulted in a regular program called "Ask the Consul" on the government television station. Its success plays an important part in managing the potentially troublesome negatives in the high visa refusal rate. Some initiatives in support of MSP goals, especially investment, economic growth and development, global health and medical administration, receive effusive praise and coverage, but not necessarily because of embassy public diplomacy efforts.

Embassy public diplomacy efforts are not well integrated or coordinated. One agency head told the OIG team that television coverage of its events, even when the Ambassador participated, was more by accident than by design. The Department of- ficer with public diplomacy ancillary duties and the USAID mission director are both relatively new to post, but neither was aware that some of their LE staff had public affairs as part of their work requirements. There is no regular meeting of all parties supposedly involved in public affairs, and the LE staff are unclear about their own and their colleagues' duties. All risk duplicating others' work or missing something on the assumption it will be covered by someone else. A consular entry-level officer (ELO) in the public diplomacy cone deserves high praise for providing public diplomacy assistance, particularly regarding the very successful September 23 through

October 1, 2007, visit of the U.S. Naval Ship Comfort hospital ship. That officer also assumes acting PAO responsibilities during staffing gaps. Embassy Georgetown is missing opportunities by permitting this ragged situation to continue.

Recommendation 1: Embassy Georgetown should establish an integrated interagency public affairs section that services the entire mission. (Action: Embassy Georgetown, in coordination with WHA)

Recommendation 2: Embassy Georgetown should develop and implement a coordinated interagency public diplomacy strategic communication plan. (Action: Embassy Georgetown, in coordination with WHA)

The FY 2008 MSP requested an LE staff public diplomacy specialist position for outreach and a full-time PAO at the entry level. Those LE staff currently involved part time in public affairs work use only the most basic research tools. They do not use Nexis Lexis or any of the databases that would be drawn on in an information resources center. Because the public affairs function at Embassy Georgetown does not have an information resources center, there are limited distribution lists and even more limited research support to the media, the Parliament, government ministries, academics, or nongovernmental organizations. The OIG team supports the request for a dedicated public diplomacy LE staff person, in addition to the other part-time assets now available. The OIG team also recognizes the need for additional officer time dedicated to public diplomacy, but does not believe a PAO is the answer, although it would be easier for the Department to direct an ELO to Georgetown for that purpose than to find a more experienced PAO to volunteer for such an assignment. Given the priorities for experienced PAOs in other parts of the world, as determined by the Department's Global Repositioning Initiative, the OIG team believes it would be more effective to have a regionalized PAO based in Washington or at the FRC. A regionalized PAO could supplement one post's efforts and resources while rendering assistance to others in similar circumstances. A regionalized PAO could also help monitor the local press online, draft press releases, do research, set up speakers for digital videoconferences, update the annual human rights reports, and contribute to other reports.

Recommendation 3: Embassy Georgetown, in coordination with the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, should request funding for a new locally employed staff person to be dedicated full time to public affairs work. (Action: Embassy Georgetown, in coordination with WHA)

Recommendation 4: Embassy Georgetown should request that the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, in coordination with the Bureaus of Educational and Cultural Affairs, International Information Programs, and Human Resources, provide regionalized public diplomacy assistance. (Action: Embassy Georgetown, in coordination with WHA, ECA, IIP, and DGHR)

The Department's public diplomacy program budget for Embassy Georgetown is \$3,000, or just enough to program one speaker a year. The post makes no use of digital videoconferencing (DVC) equipment for a virtual speaker's program linked to MSP goals. As noted below, this capability is not available at the post now, but with assistance from a regionalized public diplomacy resource, it could be pulled together and used. An informal recommendation addresses this issue.

CONSULAR

The consular section, staffed primarily by an assortment of Civil Service officers on hard-to-fill excursion tours, out-of-cone officers and ELOs, and a consular associate, is functioning at least adequately. The OIG team did not have the time to confirm a higher level of performance. The section's NIV refusal rates are high, with approximately two-thirds of all applicants refused initially and an adjusted refusal rate of over 60 percent. Aggressive anti-fraud measures are required for the large immigrant visa clientele, which is as numerous as the NIV applicants, and in American citizenship work. It is noteworthy that the high level of NIV refusals and the antifraud measures have not posed a strong negative in U.S.-Guyanese relations. NIV applications have been declining since 2003, possibly because of the high refusal rate, the cost of the visa fees, and the continued brain drain. Each year approximately two percent of Guyana's population emigrates to the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, or to other Caribbean Community and Common Market member countries.¹ For workload reasons, a seventh American consular officer position was eliminated in 2006.

The consular section chief arrived less than a month before the OIG team. At that time, the section did not include a single consular cone officer. One ELO in the consular cone arrived on the last day of the inspection. There are 16 LE staff in addition to six American Foreign Service officers or Civil Service employees and one

¹The Caribbean Community and Common Market was established by the Treaty of Chaguaramas, which came into effect on August 1, 1973.

American consular associate. Although the American staff in the section is bright and highly motivated, it is regrettable the Department has not done a better job of ensuring that some experienced consular cone officers are regularly assigned to this hard-to-fill post. However, the Bureau of Consular Affairs did send a consular management assistance team in early 2006 that provided a number of helpful recommendations to strengthen the section. Of the seven officers in the section at the time of that visit, five were ELOs who were not consular cone officers. After the departure of the previous consular section chief in 2007, this large consular section was briefly led by a Civil Service employee in her inaugural consular assignment.

The very competent new section chief is in her third hard-to-fill excursion tour as a Civil Service employee. The OIG team counseled her regarding consular management and human resources issues in the section that require action and will probably be handled well. She had already reviewed the visa referral program and issued a revised visa referral policy. She also intends to continue the “Ask the Consul” television program that was established by her predecessor.

Despite its high refusal rate and the high fraud environment in Guyana, the consular section does not have a dedicated fraud officer to run its three-LE staff fraud prevention unit. Still, the 2006 consular management assistance team commended the post for its fraud prevention efforts. Embassy Georgetown hosted a successful regional anti-fraud conference in 2007. The embassy is scheduled to receive an assistant regional security officer for investigations in FY 2008, and one of the incoming consular officers will be reprogrammed to have fraud as a primary responsibility.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Embassy Georgetown was previously neglected as a “back water” post – among the last in line to receive support. This was changed due to the arrival of a very strong management officer two years ago who has been strongly supported by the current Ambassador. Together they have enforced discipline, cleaned out the dead-wood, and corrected much that was ailing this embassy. This former special embassy program post is now receiving considerable external support, especially from the FRC and the Charleston Global Financial Services Center.

RESOURCES

Georgetown has 34 direct-hire, seven long-term temporary duty and five eligible family member personnel, and 96 LE staff.

The post profiles for staffing are:

	American Direct Hires		Locally-Employed Staff		Total
	State	Other Agency ¹	State LE staff	Other Agency LE Staff	
Georgetown	25	21	76	20	142

According to the post profiles, the FY 2008 budget targets for operations are:

	ICASS	Program	PD	Rep ²	OBO	DS	Total
Georgetown	\$1,817,600	\$1,286,700	\$10,300	\$13,300	\$739,900	\$956,200	\$4,824,000

¹DOD, USAID, PC and HHS (CDC)

²Total of State and Public Diplomacy Representation funds

American staffing at Georgetown is chronically short, even though the embassy is accorded a 25 percent hardship allowance and is officially designated a hard-to-fill post. Two Civil Service employees are now serving in the consular section. One of the 10 positions worldwide in the Department's professional associates program is in Georgetown. Numerous temporary-duty employees have been sent from Washington to fill gaps, at least partially, but this leads to a lack of continuity in positions where there is not a strong corps of LE staff to provide historical perspective.

These conditions make it essential for the FRC continue and even step up its strong program of support visits to Georgetown. The OIG team informally recommended the visits be longer and that more be done by the Florida regional assistance team for badly needed detailed training.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The embassy enjoys the presence of a management officer with a financial background and good support by the Charleston Global Financial Services Center in cashiering, disbursement, payroll, and accounting. Like other embassy elements, however, it is bedeviled by problems in personnel management.

The frequent visits by the FRC regional financial management officer and the ability to interact by phone and e-mail between visits, means Georgetown financial management is also helped in budgeting, vouchering, electronic processing, and banking. One example of the problems solved concerned 477 unprocessed transactions attributed to Georgetown. Due to an electronic problem related to bandwidth, the embassy ranked fourth worst in the world in such transactions. With the help of the regional financial management officer, post was able to eliminate almost all of them. Based on the regional financial management officer's trip reports and discussions with the management officer, the OIG team concluded there did not appear to be any major unaddressed financial problems.

Post converted to payroll by electronic funds transfer one and one-half years ago. Payroll checks are deposited directly to employee accounts, which significantly reduces payday processing time.

GENERAL SERVICES AND FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

Although a detailed review of the various areas of general services was precluded by the short inspection time, one common problem was noticeable: training. Whether talking about motor pool, shipping and customs, procurement, expendable supplies, property inventories, or travel services, there is in each case a chronic need for remedial training as well as for constant efforts to find good candidates for positions.

Facilities management and maintenance and repair are prime examples. Not only is there considerable difficulty in hiring and retaining able employees, once hired they often require very close supervision. The obvious alternative of hiring local contractors is often not available. There are few contractors in Guyana, and the quality of their work is spotty. However, bringing in U.S. contractors would be prohibitively expensive.

Many maintenance and repair employees, and even many contractors, do not drive, so they must be driven to their work sites. They also use public transport, such as a bus or even a donkey cart to transport building materials to a job, sometimes without planning. Therefore, they do not have the tools or materials necessary for the job. Under these circumstances, little preventative maintenance can be done; most time is spent performing triage for the most critical projects.

For the leased properties, many of the landlords (including that of the chief of mission residence) are uncooperative even though the leases spell out their maintenance obligations. Post has been making an effort to maximize leases with the cooperative landlords and drop the ones with those who are not responsive.

An OIG inspector briefly visited the warehouse, which is the old consular office building. It is in bad shape with a leaky roof, insecure doors, and random storage of assets. Post has proposed a project to raze it and build a new warehouse/receiving area and commissary on the site. This has yet to be funded. In the meantime, purchasing metal shelving would be a major step toward organizing the furniture, furnishings, and other property. The OIG inspector was also able to drive by the site of the proposed deputy chief of mission residence, which looked like an excellent property, and to briefly tour the chief of mission residence, which after a concentrated effort by post now appears to be in excellent condition, if still vulnerable to flooding.

The recent visit by the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO) area manager was a good opportunity to display for him how flooding affects the warehouse and housing in general. The OIG team informally suggested that post work with OBO to see if an international maintenance assistance team could be sent to Georgetown to help both with cleared area projects at the chancery (which have been in limbo for a long time) and the other difficult maintenance and repair projects.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Embassy Georgetown received DVC equipment early in 2007. Although wiring has been installed in the auditorium, the post has not permanently installed the equipment itself because of fears of possible theft at this lock-and-leave post, and because the current bandwidth available will not support it. The cost invoiced by the state telecommunications monopoly (\$31,294 per year) to provide additional bandwidth is beyond the embassy's budget. The Bureau of Information Resource Management has also denied a post request to share bandwidth from the current virtual private network. An alternative is to run DVCs over the Internet using the Department's OpenNet. One drawback would be a serious degradation of the speed of OpenNet for other mission users during DVCs, but this could be managed by scheduling and advanced notification of users so as to minimally disrupt the flow of other work.

Recommendation 6: Embassy Georgetown should coordinate with the Bureau of Information Resource Management to run digital videoconferences over OpenNet and complete the installation of the system in the approved configuration. (Action: Embassy Georgetown, in coordination with IRM)

SECURITY PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

The regional security office has had a rotation of 15 temporary duty regional security officers before the arrival of the incumbent. The regional security officer seems to have an adequate budget that he marshals effectively. He has endeavored to focus on the local guard program, residential security, and other life safety programs. His assistant departed post, and the individual selected to replace him was unable to

come. A replacement is being sought. As noted earlier, the Department has approved an additional assistant regional security officer investigator to be filled in 2008 to work against consular fraud.

A recent visit by the Bureau of Diplomatic Security area management facilitated progress in relations with the contractor for the local guards and resolved numerous misunderstandings.

MANAGEMENT CONTROLS

Embassy Georgetown has well-documented management controls. The Chief of Mission's annual management certification appeared to be in order, and the designation of responsibility list was complete. Post completed the risk assessment and heard from the Department that its scores were very good. No corrective action plans are required.

The OIG team had the travel assistant review business and first class travel for the last year. There was only one instance: the Ambassador flew business class for a trip in excess of 14 hours to a conference in Africa. Travel was performed in accordance with policy.

In 2005, several audits of the assets in the warehouse indicated a major discrepancy. Ultimately, it was discovered about \$45,000 of property had disappeared. The LE staff there was subsequently fired, new staff was hired, and an eligible family member was designated to help oversee warehouse operations.

Information Security

A staffing gap since August 2007 has left the post with only one American employee in the information management office: the information management officer. FRC sent a temporary duty information management specialist over to provide assistance for 60 days. A volunteer cable failed to attract any bidders on the vacancy. This situation is intolerable in the long run for a post of this size. One unavoidable weakness is the inability to have a proper separation of duties between the information management officer and the information systems security officer, as required by 12 FAM 631.2-2 and 12 FAM 621.3-2.

Consular Systems Internal Controls

One indication that consular systems internal controls are effective is that although LE staff from the consular section were among the 28 LE staff terminated in the past two years, none was terminated for malfeasance, notwithstanding a history of such problems that included a previous consular officer. However, the consular section is experiencing unresolved problems with the automated cash register

system as it relates to reconciling payments by credit card. The post is working with the Department to resolve the problem and is manually reconciling the credit card reports in the meantime. The consular section has multiple instances of inadequate line of sight supervision – an issue raised in the 2006 consular management assistance team report. This can be addressed in small part by making a window in the wall of the section chief’s office or, better still, by unobtrusively installing a closed-circuit television system with multiple cameras.

Recommendation 7: Embassy Georgetown, in coordination with the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations and the Bureau of Consular Affairs, should seek approval and funding to install a closed-circuit television system in the consular section to improve oversight by the section chief. (Action: Embassy Georgetown, in coordination with OBO and CA)

QUALITY OF LIFE

Many factors combine to impact the quality of life at Embassy Georgetown. It is a post with a critical crime threat. Some employees, especially single females, are reluctant to attend social events alone or go to the limited entertainment facilities at night. A visit to a restaurant means going to a selected few and leaving quickly afterwards; it is not deemed safe to linger or wander in many of the shopping areas.

Post has taken a major step forward with its OBO-funded gymnasium project that should be completed by early November. This new structure on the compound will afford embassy personnel the chance to use the exercise facilities after hours without having to open up this lock-and-leave chancery.

Much of Georgetown is either at or slightly below sea level and is right on the ocean. Major rain storms mean extensive flooding. Many of the residences, including the chief of mission residence, have been flooded in the recent past. During a harsh storm in 2005, embassy-owned assets in the leased housing pool suffered \$350,000 in flood-related damages. The post interagency housing board and the management officer are working to drop leases in the most flood-prone areas and opt for higher ground.

Post has a health unit with an efficient and conscientious registered nurse who has worked at the embassy for 15 years. The unit is spacious and well-equipped. The Bogota-based regional medical officer visits usually every three months, and there is an annual visit from the regional psychiatrist. The regional medical officer had not visited in a while, though the regional medical manager, who is also a medical doctor, did visit. Several employees commented that they would appreciate another regional medical officer visit. The nurse noted many of the employees she sees are stressed by the lack of recreation facilities and the real increase in crime. The CDC program doctors have frequently helped out in the health unit. The embassy experienced seven medical evacuations in the past year.

The embassy had no community liaison office coordinator for 18 months, but the position has now been filled by an enthusiastic and energetic coordinator who just returned from the community liaison office training. She and her locally employed co-community liaison office coordinator have already taken steps to actively

improve morale at post by organizing an aggressive sponsor and orientation program for new arrivals and surveying the staff to determine what sort of programs might be supported.

The American school (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6) It currently has five students from embassy families out of 74 students in all. The school received \$50,000 in grants from the U.S. government in FY 2007. The management officer is working to get an accreditation team to visit so that the school's standards can be evaluated.

INFORMAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Informal recommendations cover operational matters not requiring action by organizations outside the inspected unit and/or the parent regional bureau. Informal recommendations will not be subject to the OIG compliance process. However, any subsequent OIG inspection or on-site compliance review will assess the mission's progress in implementing the informal recommendations.

Public Diplomacy

The LE staff working on public affairs issues are unaware of, untrained in, or have no ready access to standard research tools and databases of actual public affairs sections. This hampers the quality of research support.

Informal Recommendation 1: Embassy Georgetown should arrange for training of locally employed staff working in public affairs and secure their access to additional research tools.

Public diplomacy program funds are sufficient to support just one speaker per year. Through the use of DVCs, a virtual speaker program could be put in place to strengthen outreach.

Informal Recommendation 2: Embassy Georgetown should make use of digital videoconferencing to supplement its public diplomacy program outreach.

Regionalization

Embassy Georgetown is chronically understaffed and has an LE staff in desperate need of remedial training in many areas.

Informal Recommendation 3: Embassy Georgetown should request visits by subject matter offices to provide specialized evaluation and training, such as from the Bureau of Administration, Office of Logistics Management, the Office of the Procurement Executive, and the Bureau of Consular Affairs, Office of the Executive Director.

Human Resources

Embassy Georgetown has a continuing problem with an LE staff in desperate need of remedial training in many areas. Many American staff positions have gaps or a rotation of temporary-duty officers covering them. These conditions make it essential for the FRC to continue and even step up its strong program of support visits to Georgetown.

Informal Recommendation 4: Embassy Georgetown should request the Florida Regional Center to conduct longer visits by regional personnel and more Florida regional assistance team visits to enable more badly needed detailed training and evaluation.

General Services and Facilities Management

Embassy Georgetown does not have a reliable range of contractors available locally to perform preventative or even emergency maintenance and repairs. The post has a number of projects pending in the cleared access area.

Informal Recommendation 5: Embassy Georgetown should work with the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations to see if an international maintenance assistance team could possibly be sent to post to help with cleared area projects at the chancery (which have been in limbo for a long time) and possibly with the other difficult maintenance and repair projects.

PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS

	Name	Arrival Date
Ambassador	David M. Robinson	08/06
Deputy Chief of Mission	Vacant	

Chiefs of Sections:

Political/Economic/(Public Affairs)	Rolf A. Olson	08/07
Consular	Nyda Budig	09/07
Management	David M. Thomas	09/05
General Services	Gabriel M. Hons-Oliver	07/07
Information Management	John P. Irvin	08/07
Facilities Management	Keith B. Ellis	12/06
Regional Security	Brandon H. Lee	09/05

Other Agencies:

Department of Defense	Steven D. Stanley	06/07
Centers for Disease Control	LaMar Hasbrouck	10/07
Peace Corps	James Geenan	10/05
U.S. Agency for International Development	Peter R. Hubbard	09/07

ABBREVIATIONS

CDC	Centers for Disease Control
Department	Department of State
DVC	Digital videoconferencing
ELO	Entry-level officer
FRC	Florida Regional Center
LE	Locally employed
MSP	Mission Strategic Plan
NIV	Nonimmigrant visa
OBO	Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations
OIG	Office of Inspector General
PAO	Public affairs officer
PEPFAR	President's Emergency Program for AIDS Relief
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development

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