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

# Report of Inspection

Embassy Dushanbe,  
Tajikistan

Report Number ISP-I-08-17A, February 2008

## ~~IMPORTANT NOTICE~~

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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, U.S. Department of State.

### **PURPOSE**

The Office of Inspections provides the Secretary of State and Congress with systematic and independent evaluations of the operations of the Department of State, its posts abroad, and related activities. 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 instance of fraud, waste, or abuse exist; and whether adequate steps for detection, correction, and prevention have been taken.

### **METHODOLOGY:**

In conducting this inspection, the inspectors: reviewed pertinent records in the Department and elsewhere; as appropriate, circulated, reviewed, and compiled the results of survey instruments; conducted on site interviews with personnel at the overseas missions, in the Department, and elsewhere; and reviewed the substance of the report and its findings and recommendations with office, 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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## KEY JUDGMENTS

- Although not unique to overseas missions, Embassy Dushanbe's operations are hampered by frequent turnover of American personnel. At the time of the inspection, 65 percent of the Department of State (Department) direct-hire Americans had been at post for two months or less. At this medium-sized embassy, there is little depth in any of the units or sections.
- The relative inexperience among the American staff is ameliorated by the Ambassador, deputy chief of mission (DCM), and chiefs of some other agencies who have been at post for more than a year. The locally employed (LE) staff play an ever-more important role in continuity of operations. Not all of them are well trained to carry out those responsibilities.
- Physical separation inherent in the design of the new chancery, primarily because of security requirements, engenders a sense of disenfranchisement among LE 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 LE staff believed that Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) does not work.
- The Ambassador's moratorium on approving National Security Decision Directive-38 (NSDD-38) requests for additional staff positions for other agencies is 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 is one of the most important projects (linking Tajikistan and Afghanistan) funded by the U.S. government. The bridge typifies an approach in which the U.S. government is out in front on projects that may not have unqualified support from the Tajik government.
- The bridge opened for limited use (i.e., primarily cement trucks for road construction) on October 27, 2007). Indications are that most traffic initially will flow from Afghanistan into Tajikistan. Movement of illegal substances and persons with mal intent poses a long-range challenge.

The inspection took place in Washington, DC, between September 4 and 21, 2007 and in Dushanbe, Tajikistan between October 16 and 30, 2007. Ambassador David Zweifel (Team Leader), Alan Berenson (Deputy Team Leader), Francis Cheever, Craig Cheney, Zandra Flemister, Barry Langevin, Timothy Wildy, and Roman Zawada conducted the inspection.

## CONTEXT

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, in a sense, conducted by remote control 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 LE staff did the work they were authorized and able to perform.



In 2002 (the date of the last Department inspection of this embassy), the staff consisted of 17 Americans and 130 local employees; most of the latter were guards. Five years later, the numbers have ballooned to 46 direct-hire Americans, five eligible family member

positions, and 271 local employees. 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. Based on employees at post, the per capita International Cooperative Administrative Support Services budget in FY 2005 was \$10,000. In FY 2007, the equivalent funding is just over \$8,000 per employee. Projections are for further decreases in funding levels, but the complexity of projects and programs may increase.





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Finally, most Department American employees are assigned to Dushanbe for two years. As of the time of this inspection, 11 out of 17 have been at post two months or less. Three are Civil Service employees on excursion tours, hence with relatively little embassy experience. Five are entry-level officers (ELOs) or specialists (most, however, with impressive credentials prior to joining the Department). The lone office management specialist is a rover on a three-month temporary duty assignment (TDY). By job category, American supervision in most offices is one person deep. By default, much of the thin continuity on the American side resides in the Ambassador, DCM, and heads of other agencies represented at post. In sum, the Department contingent is long on enthusiasm, short on experience. An offset: almost 40 percent of American employees at Embassy Dushanbe are able to conduct business in either Russian or Tajik.



## EXECUTIVE DIRECTION

The Ambassador has the right background and credentials to direct the efforts of Embassy Dushanbe. She previously served as Ambassador in Turkmenistan, was DCM in Riga, Latvia, and worked in Embassy Moscow. Her linguistic capabilities include fluent Russian and passable Tajik. Most importantly, her earlier career was spent in management positions. At this time, the most vexing operational problems at Embassy Dushanbe are precisely in that realm. Her mastery of management issues at the embassy was demonstrated throughout the inspection. Nothing escapes her attention. No one assigned to this embassy has any doubts as to who is in charge.

The Ambassador's intense concern and style is complemented by the DCM's method of working. He is equally involved and aware of issues, but conveys a rather more relaxed approach in seeking solutions. Both front office principals are accessible and responsive to members of the staff. The DCM is more visible in terms of 'walk-around' management, especially in relating to the LE staff.

Delegation of authority and responsibility is a hallmark of the Ambassador's executive approach. She places confidence in subordinates and eschews micro-management. On the other hand, she maintains close control over reporting out of Embassy Dushanbe, essentially clearing off on, or authorizing reporting from all sections and most agencies at post.

American officers respond well to the pattern established by the Ambassador. They are encouraged to travel as widely as possible within the country and to push the envelope in terms of developing contacts within the host government and society. The latter is not an easy effort. Appointments with officials generally are subject to requests (via diplomatic notes) sent through the Foreign Ministry. Some of the staff are annoyed at this requirement, but it is one decreed by the Tajik government, not by the front office.

## RIGHTSIZING

When the former Soviet Union collapsed into a gaggle of independent nations, then Secretary of State James Baker's stated position was that each U.S. embassy in the new republics were to be staffed by no more than 15 American direct-hire employees. Fifteen years later, all have grown beyond those numbers. Embassy Dushanbe now has 46 direct-hire Americans, up from 17 just three years ago. The original design of the NEC was for 78 desk positions. With rapid growth, the burgeoning staff has outgrown the office facilities by 38 desk positions before the NEC was occupied in July 2006. By the time of the inspection, the mission squeezed another 10 desk positions, bringing the grand total to 136 desk positions.

Some of the growth has been in non-Department programs. The regional offices of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) were relocated here when no longer able to function out of Embassy Tashkent. Law enforcement objectives also are pursued by other officers from the Department of Justice, the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL), and Export Control and Border Security (EXBS). Each American position at Embassy Dushanbe has a definable rationale. However, there is imbalance between those involved in program implementation and the administrative capacity to support those programs.

The Ambassador has been courageous in dealing with this imbalance. She declared a moratorium on further NSDD-38 decisions unless and until the embassy's management capacities including staffing and space will support further growth. Her position should be sustained.

Even with the Ambassador's decision, further expansion of the American program staff is in the offing.

- The Ambassador has agreed to four DEA positions; she has turned down NSDD-38 request for two more. (At the time of the inspection, only two American DEA slots were encumbered.)
- Approval has been granted for two additional positions in the office of the Defense Attaché; at the time of the inspection, one of these was filled on a long term TDY basis.
- A long-term TDY position in the Office of Defense Cooperation is to be filled by a regularly-assigned person.

The embassy's Mission Strategic Plan (MSP) for FY 2008 requests assignment of a second office management specialist, a supervisory general services officer, a third information management position, and a combined financial management/human resources officer. The Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs, on October 10, 2007 advised that it had received a full-time equivalent position to be filled by a candidate selected from the next office management specialist class in January 2008. The Office of Inspector General (OIG) team concludes that the request for a combined financial management/human resources officer should be of first priority.

Other aspects of rightsizing bear mentioning. Office space in the unclassified areas is cramped and somewhat illogical. No structural modifications are permitted within the NEC during the two-year warranty on the facility following occupancy in July 2006. With the growth from 78 desks to 136, the embassy used almost all expansion space available in the original design. In 2007, embassy Dushanbe made two requests for changes, and both were granted and funded by the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO).

Finally, rightsizing presumes a match between the number of employees, the facilities they occupy and – critically – the U.S. policy objectives that should and can be realistically addressed. The last point is a dynamic factor, and the understandable reaction across the spectrum of the U.S. government is to over-plan and over-staff in anticipation of finding the right match between U.S. and Tajik objectives.



## POLICY AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

### FOREIGN ASSISTANCE

U.S. government assistance is the key to realizing four of the six main goals outlined in the MSP. They are: Disrupting extremist and criminal organizations and ensuring peace and stability; promoting economic growth and development; building good governance and stronger democratic practices; and promoting a healthy and educated Tajik society to build stability and prosperity. Successful implementation of these programs helps realize a fifth goal, increasing mutual understanding and building trust between the United States and Tajikistan.

U.S. government funded foreign assistance totaled \$51.7 million in FY 2006 and \$45.2 million in FY 2007. Freedom Support Act funds for both years were relatively constant, at \$23.8 million in FY 2006 and \$23.8 million in FY 2007. In addition, Tajikistan received some \$30 million of donated commodities from the United States during each of these years. These are not large sums in terms of U.S. government assistance expenditures worldwide, but they have a sizeable impact on Tajikistan, a small and impoverished country with a deteriorating infrastructure. U.S. government assistance is declining overall, a trend that is likely to continue. Tajikistan no longer will be eligible for food aid (which will total just over eight million dollars in FY 2008), having just missed the cut-off.

Funding comes from many different sources and is implemented by different offices of the Department and different agencies present at the embassy. Often, one source will fund several programs implemented by different agencies and offices. Proponents of this system argue that it enables greater flexibility. Nevertheless, it requires close coordination and information exchanges.

The embassy uses the Border and Law Enforcement Working Group as the instrument to achieve program coordination. The DCM chairs its weekly meetings; the INL chief provides the agenda. As well as promoting coordination and information exchanges, the working group encourages discussions of the effectiveness of the assistance programs and how to implement them better.

The provision of material assistance is generally accompanied by training programs and post-donation monitoring. The Tajik government welcomes material assistance, but bristles at restrictions. It is especially suspicious of programs promoting good governance and stronger democratic practices, perceiving that these programs are perceived to threaten the government by changing the values and perceptions of Tajik citizens. While the Tajik government welcomes programs to combat terrorism, it is wary of counternarcotics programs, as these may impinge on the interests of individuals and criminal organizations with close ties to leading government figures. (Tajikistan has a good record on drug seizures but a poor one on breaking up drug cartels or catching drug overlords.)

Some major donors to Tajikistan, such as Russia, Iran, and China, gain favor with the government by offering large infrastructure projects, such as hydro-electric dams, and fewer restrictions on the material or monetary assistance they extend. In contrast, U.S. government programs promoting economic growth and development are aimed at small and medium-sized enterprises and independent farmers.

An embassy initiative founded the Border Initiative Working Group, a group of major international donors to Tajikistan. Because of the different approaches of the members to assistance, the meetings are more an information exchange than an instrument of coordination, much less a means of leveraging the Tajik government.

## POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SECTION

Despite the limited U.S. government funding resources available, Embassy Dushanbe has achieved some noteworthy successes in keeping with MSP goals. For example,

- The embassy led an effort by several interested governments in pressing the Tajik government to undertake prison reform and more readily grant prison access;
- Ongoing dialogue with the Tajik government on behalf of a nongovernmental organization (NGO) has been critical in keeping the head of that NGO out of prison and able to operate in Tajikistan;
- Embassy advocacy succeeded in obtaining settlement of a \$30 million trade dispute with a private American firm.

During the course of the inspection, an embassy-organized trade fair brought together Tajik and Afghan business people (the event was held in Kunduz, Afghanistan).



The main function of the political/economic (P/E) section is to report directly and indirectly on the goals of the MSP by placing them in a broad context and commenting on progress toward them. Reporting by the section is extensive, descriptive, and analytic, depending on the subject at hand. Portfolios follow a logical distribution according to the backgrounds and skills of the officers. Last year's Human Rights, Religious Freedom, and Trafficking in Persons reports were well-written and critical of Tajik government shortcomings. The commercial guide is well-written and complete.

In 2006, the P/E section doubled in size, going from two officers to four. Those in the section all wanted to serve in embassy Dushanbe. The relative inexperience of some officers in the P/E section is somewhat offset by their work experience prior to entering the Foreign Service.

Working in Tajikistan presents a paradox. Since the November 2006 presidential elections, the government has demonstrated a trend toward authoritarianism. The Tajikistani government has also tried to increase its hold on the population at large by becoming more authoritarian. Yet P/E officers have generally easy access to NGOs, opposition figures, intellectuals, and local administrators throughout the country. Officers have frequent meetings outside the embassy and go on a number of reporting trips outside Dushanbe, despite time-consuming journeys over rough roads. In many cases, the P/E LE staff has managed to maintain working level contacts in certain ministries. An exception is the Ministry of Culture and Religious Affairs, which tries to avoid contact with the embassy following crackdowns on certain religious groups (specifically, the Jehovah's Witnesses) and unregistered mosques.

The P/E local employees share an internal office area with LE staff working for other sections and agencies. Despite physical separation (the American officers work in a classified area), relations between the officers and LE staff are cordial and collegial, with frequent daily face-to-face contacts, telephone calls, and e-mails. There are also meetings for P/E staff twice a week and a weekly press briefing that the DCM and public diplomacy (PD) staff attends.

Apart from occasional P/E demarches to the Tajikistani government, counterterrorism is handled by another section. Regarding transformational diplomacy, P/E officers frequently participate as speakers in outreach programs organized by the Public Diplomacy section.



**Recommendation 1:** Embassy Dushanbe should implement procedures establishing a formal notification to front office management of disciplinary counseling sessions. (Action: Embassy Dushanbe)

In addition to the INL director, the Narcotics and Law Enforcement Section (NALES) has three additional Americans assigned. They are a senior law enforcement advisor and a resident legal advisor as well as a contract engineer who was hired to monitor progress on INL-funded building sites. The lack of a dedicated person to work for him has especially stymied the resident legal advisor.

## REFUGEE AFFAIRS

The consul, an ELO on his first tour, serves in a position designated for a higher grade officer. In addition to consular duties, he is responsible for the refugee and migration portfolio. He devotes about 15 percent of his time to refugee and migration affairs, and receives guidance from the regional refugee coordinator in Moscow and from the DCM, a former refugee coordinator himself. He enjoys a strong relationship with the staff of the local UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Both the Ambassador and DCM enjoy a strong working relationship with the UNHCR representative. The consul has visited an INL funded refuge for trafficked women built by the International Organization for Migration.

Though Tajikistan is a party to the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol, it does not consistently observe the convention. At issue are about a thousand Afghan refugees who fled Afghanistan after the Soviet withdrawal. Most are educated officials of the former communist regime. Though they have been in Tajikistan nearly 18 years, they have never been granted refugee status and must frequently and onerously renew their permits to stay. Many of them have become successful merchants and have gained the dislike of their less enterprising Tajik brethren. When the Dushanbe city government tried to expel the Afghans in the summer of 2007, the embassy and UNHCR launched a concerted protest, with the embassy sending a demarche, and the Ambassador expressing her concern

to the foreign minister. The consul wrote several telegrams on the incident. (The Afghans were allowed to filter back into the city on their own after a few weeks.)

The consul also monitors the lack of preparedness of the Tajik government to receive refugees from Uzbekistan, should conditions there deteriorate. Many Tajiks live in Uzbekistan, making the lack of preparation a matter of concern to the embassy and UNHCR.

## PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

Given the country's poverty and isolation, it is not surprising that Tajiks are starved for information about the United States and eager to apply for educational exchanges. The PD section tries to increase mutual understanding and build trust between the United States and Tajikistan. The section has recently expanded with the assignment of a second American officer.

The new public affairs officer earlier served in PD sections in Moscow and Astana. She is assisted by a newly-arrived cultural affairs officer, a second-tour officer. Both are Russian speakers. The LE staff consists of two experienced older employees and two younger employees. Both of the latter have recently obtained masters' degrees in the United States.

The section has a budget of about \$795,000 at its disposal, broken down as follows: \$200,000 for Democracy Commission and alumni grants; \$200,000 to send students to the American University of Central Asia in Bishkek; and \$60,000 for speakers. There is also funding for a 20-slot International Visitors and Leadership program for \$135,000 and \$200,000 to improve English teaching.

The PD section supports three American Corners located in Tajik educational institutions and operated by local librarians paid by the Tajikistani government. An American Corner generally features a small reference library and several terminals, and serves as a meeting point for talks and other activities. The American Corner in Dushanbe received 7,800 visitors in 2006. The American Corners in Khujand and Kolub received 11,160 and 4,800 visitors respectively. (Khujand is an industrial town with a leading university and is relatively prosperous for Tajikistan.) The embassy hopes to open two more American Corners, though there is discussion in the Department to opt for cyber net cafes in order to give more young people access to the Internet.

The American Corners are supported by an Information Resource Center at the embassy, overseen by a national employee who is a trained librarian. Because the embassy is located on the outskirts of Dushanbe, public access is not easy. It was recently eased when the regional security officer removed the necessity to apply for access 24 hours in advance. Now a spontaneous visitor to the library can be cleared for entry in half an hour.

Exchange programs are heavily oversubscribed. There were 1,700 applicants for 50 places in the Future Leaders Exchange program (a high school exchange program), 244 applicants for 15 university positions, and 196 Muskie applicants for six slots. There are significantly more female applicants than male.

The new public affairs officer is addressing the need to organize the office and systematize functions. Both the LE staff handling grants and another handling cultural programming are overburdened. An assistant has already been hired to help with the grants. She will also be in charge of liaison with the alumni who have returned from visiting or studying in the United States. When approval and financing are obtained, there are plans to hire a full-time webmaster to relieve a burden currently borne by the press assistant and Information Resource Center librarian.

## CONSULAR AFFAIRS

The consular section processes nonimmigrant visa applications and provides a full range of American citizens services. Immigrant visa services for Tajikistan are handled by the consular section in Almaty, Kazakhstan. The Dushanbe consular chief is an ELO on his first tour encumbering an FS-03 graded position. The consular section receives excellent support from the front office and other mission elements.

The section is efficient and well run. The section chief has excellent Russian-language skills. The section's LE staff is comprised of two American citizens services/nonimmigrant visa clerks and one clerk/cashier. The consular officer's backup are a PD/cultural affairs officer and a P/E officer.

## Consular Controls

Consular controls are in place. The DCM reviews all of the consular officer's nonimmigrant visa issuance and refusal adjudications using the consular consolidated database. This online adjudication review ensures that the reviews required are done. Post's visa referral policy is up to date and in accordance with 9 FAM App. K. Both the DCM and the consular officer understand their visa lookout accountability responsibilities, and visa lookout accountability certifications have been submitted on a timely basis.

The consular section has a hard line between the applicant waiting room and the section's workspace. There is no direct access between these two areas. Access to the consular work space is limited to the section employees and a few others such as the regional security officer and systems staff. Access to the consular workspace for employees from other embassy sections is controlled by a combination lock. However, there is no buzzer to alert the consular staff when there is someone at this door and consular staff must physically open the door to let anyone enter the section. Installation of a bell or buzzer would allow employees from other embassy sections to alert consular staff that they are at the internal consular section door and permit consular staff to electronically open the door.

**Recommendation 2:** Embassy Dushanbe should install a bell or buzzer on the access door to the consular work area. (Action: Embassy Dushanbe)

Line of sight control is good inside the work area. All controlled equipment supplies are properly stored. Fee collection and receipting are processed in accordance with the Consular Management Handbook 700. The consular cashier has a cash advance which is kept in a locked cash box and secured at the end of the work day in a safe. Daily receipts and cash are deposited with the Class B cashier, and the OF-158 is returned to the accountable officer (consular section chief) the same day.

## Nonimmigrant Visa Services

Nonimmigrant visa applicants make appointments using the consular on-line system. Visa interviews are conducted Monday through Thursday. The wait time for an interview appointment is generally short, one or two business days. The consular section's customers are cleared by local guards then are guided to the separate consular section entrance. The section does not use off-site machine-readable visa

fee collection due to the high level of risk inherent in Tajikistan's fledgling financial institutions and most financial systems' lack of full automation. Applicants must first go to the consular cashier, submit their application, and pay the machine-readable visa fee. The applications are then screened for completeness and passed to the interviewing officer. The passports of applicants who are refused visas are returned at the end of their interview. Visaed passports are returned the next business day.

## American Citizens Services

The American citizen community is small, with only 427 private Americans registered with Embassy Dushanbe. The lack of adequate local medical facilities can create extensive work for the consular section in arranging medical evacuations for American citizens. Most of Tajikistan's American citizen community is located in Dushanbe. The American citizens services unit hours are Monday through Friday from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m., but Americans are permitted to visit the unit anytime during the workday. Dushanbe's warden messages, which are vital in an earthquake-prone country like Tajikistan, are sent through the Internet-based registration service e-mail system. There are nine wardens spread throughout the country.





## RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Agency	U.S. Direct-Hire Staff	U.S. Local-Hire Staff	Foreign National Staff	Total Staff	Total Funding FY 2007 \$000
State – D&CP	14	0	5	19	815
State – ICASS	4	3	83	90	2,615
State –ICASS Local Guard Program	0	0	69	69	784
State – Public Diplomacy -	2	0	5	7	203
State – Diplomatic Security -	2	1	65	68	918
State – Marine Security	6	0	4	10	106
State – Representation	0	0	0	0	20
PD - Representation	0	0	0	0	1
State – OBO	1	0	0	1	1,189
USAID	2	0	6	8	Non post*
Defense Attaché Office	5	0	1	6	182
Office of Defense Cooperation	2	0	3	5	Non post
EXBS	1	0	1	2	Non post
INL	1	0	2	3	513
Commerce	0	0	1	1	17
Department of Justice	2	0	1	3	Non post
DEA	4	0	0	4	Non post
<b>Totals</b>	46	4	246	296	\$7,363

Amounts shown are operating costs only. Assistance costs are not shown.

\*Non post funded

## REAL PROPERTY

### New Embassy Compound

After lengthy delays, the NEC at Dushanbe is suitable for diplomatic operations and meets most security and operational needs. The 10-acre site contains a chancery, a marine house, and a warehouse. There is an additional U.S. government owned 4.82 acre lot next to the NEC that has been set aside for expansion. There are three other off compound U.S. government-owned facilities – two residences and the Michurina general services facility. The OBO approved and funded a recreation center to be built on the NEC. The contract has been awarded and the design as of October 25, 2007 was 60 percent complete.

Although the chancery is new, additional modifications are needed. There are design flaws and warranty items that require correction. For example, some security windows are cracked, and some sections of cement walkways need to be refinished. The loading dock is basically useless because it only accommodates American specification vehicles; the platform is too high for locally purchased vehicles commonly used for deliveries. The freight elevator was installed on the wrong side of a two elevator shaft and does not go to the fourth floor where mechanical systems are located nor does it go to the basement rendering this space totally unutilized. The fire alarm control panel is located in the consular section rather than with other mechanical systems. Approximately 700 square feet of space located in classified access areas, is sealed off with no access. Presumably the space could be made accessible and converted to usable space.

It should be noted that progress has already been made on some warranty items. A nine member OBO team is working on correcting remaining punch list items and will continue to work on these punch list items through December 2007.

**Recommendation 3:** Embassy Dushanbe, in coordination with the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, should identify all design flaws and develop a corrective action plan prioritizing projects based on urgency, the degree of structural modification required, the funding needed, and obtain the necessary Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations approvals before modifications are made. (Action: Embassy Dushanbe, in coordination with OBO)

## Government-Owned Residences

A government owned residence, formerly the chancery, is in a state of disrepair. The property is unoccupied and would require extensive renovation before it could be used as a single or multiple use residence. A recent renovation left the other government owned residence in good condition.

## Michurina General Services Compound

The Michurina facility is unsuitable for general services operations. The facility contains a condemned school house used to store supplies and a prefabricated building. Motor pool operations are also conducted from this facility. A possible solution to remedy the mission's facilities woes is to sell this facility and the former chancery to generate funding for a better facility located at the NEC. A new facility would alleviate current facility limitations including inadequate warehouse, garage, underground fuel storage tanks, parking spaces for official vehicles, and facilities workshops. Colocation of this facility at the NEC would improve supervisory oversight, communication, efficiency, and security. Cost savings might also be realized. However, sale of the Michurina compound without a replacement facility would severely compromise administrative operations. To start the process, the mission should obtain OBO approval and conduct a real estate market survey to determine the market value of the Michurina facility and the former chancery.

In May 2007, the mission submitted to the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs (SCA) a proposal for a general services annex and warehouse under the capital security construction project program. The proposed facility would include a motor pool, two maintenance bays, car washing facilities, underground gas and diesel, additional warehouse space, additional facilities maintenance shops, and 16 work spaces for general services and facilities maintenance staff. Having higher priorities, SCA rejected the mission's proposal and did not include the proposal in its annual submission to OBO. The OIG team believes that the mission would have a more persuasive argument and greater chance of project approval if the proposal is submitted as a post-managed regular capital project. The original proposal is too grandiose in scope. A lower cost and smaller scale project would meet the mission's requirements. There is no need to move the entire general services office section from the chancery into a new annex. A suite of facilities management offices would be sufficient. A new proposal should be developed incorporating proceeds from the sale of the Michurina facility and the former chancery.

**Recommendation 4:** Embassy Dushanbe should request, and the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations should approve, the commission of a real estate market survey to determine the market value of the Michurina facility and former chancery. (Action: Embassy Dushanbe, in coordination with OBO)

**Recommendation 5:** Embassy Dushanbe should prepare and submit to the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations for approval, a lower cost and smaller scale proposal as a regular capital project that incorporates proceeds from the sale of the Michurina facility and former chancery. (Action: Embassy Dushanbe)

## Housing

With the exception of one, all American direct hires are housed in short-term leased properties, including the Ambassador and DCM. The mission has 33 short-term leased properties. The residences are in good to fair condition. The general services section terminated leases for its less desirable Soviet style shared apartments. The housing board, in most cases, approves all housing appeals.

The OIG team found several housing program noncompliances. Although safety inspections are conducted, residential lease files do not contain safety inspection checklists. Posts must document all inspections. The cost to prepare short-term lease residences for occupancy exceeds the \$5,000 ceiling because of a fire and safety requirement to change aluminum wiring to copper. The mission has not prepared a justification for release from this limitation nor does the mission track the amount of make ready cost spent on each residence.

## Designated Residences

Embassy Dushanbe was established as special embassy program post. The DCM did not have a designated residence under these regulations. Now that the special embassy program has been abolished, all DCMs can be assigned to a designated residence. According to 15 FAM 235.1, residences, whether U.S. government-owned, long-term leased, or short-term leased, must be designated for the Ambassador, DCM, and consul general. Such properties are exempt from the space standards.



The embassy's FY 2008 budget request sought funding for establishment of two ICASS positions – an American financial management/human resources officer and a supervisory general services officer. The OIG team believes that the American financial management/human resources officer position is sorely needed both to manage and maintain controls over financial operations and address shortcomings in human resource operations.

**Recommendation 8:** The Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs, in coordination with the Bureau of Human Resources, should establish a financial management/human resources officer position in Embassy Dushanbe. (Action: SCA, in coordination with DGHR)

## GENERAL SERVICES OPERATIONS

The general services unit provides a wide range of services in a difficult, third world environment. Despite a cash economy, host country corruption, unpredictable supply lines, staffing gaps, and understaffing, the section is operating at a satisfactory level. The general services officer is correct to place an emphasis on management controls and training. As one of the leaders of the management section, the general services officer will need to set well defined and realistic priorities. A diplomatic “no” to unreasonable customer demands and requests will have to be exercised at times to ensure the success of the unit and to prevent burn out of the staff.

In an ideal world, Embassy Dushanbe would get an experienced second general services officer position. The officers would concentrate on improving general services for a mission of 300 staff. During consultation, SCA stated that there are no full-time equivalent positions available to fill this void. As this is the case, a reallocation of resources within the five central Asian posts and other SCA posts might be a solution until new full-time equivalent positions are created. What is clear is that the mission will need assistance to accomplish some of the labor intensive tasks ahead. These tasks would include correcting remaining real property issues. Assistance could take several forms including site visits from experienced management staff, Frankfurt assistance visits, and hiring additional staff. The effectiveness of provided assistance would be dependent on the experience level of those providing the assistance.

## Procurement

The procurement section provides adequate service. Although more goods are becoming available on the local economy, many items have to be procured from other countries. Goods shipped from the United States, Germany, and Belgium can take four to six months to be delivered. Middle Eastern and Turkish suppliers offer quicker delivery times. Where appropriate, the section is using these vendors to improve delivery times.

Customers are concerned about how long it takes to receive goods and services; feedback to clients about the status of orders has been minimal. Time estimates for expected delivery dates are dependent on several factors. Because of this variability, the procurement unit should provide follow-up at specified intervals. The section should inform the customer when a delay is encountered, and provide information about when the goods or services are expected to arrive.

The embassy is not using WebPass software. This electronic procurement module of WebPass allows a requestor to track procurement requests throughout the procurement cycle. Use of this electronic system will improve accountability and tracking. The Regional Procurement Support Office – Frankfurt is used for contracts over \$250,000. The OIG team made several informal recommendations addressing procurement issues.

## Program Procurement

The procurement unit processes NALES programmatic contracts. This arrangement is convenient and cost effective for NALES, but it is a burden to the procurement section. The general services officer is far too busy with daily operations to take on this task. It also places a strain on the procurement staff who are busy with administrative procurements.

In addition, the general services officer and staff do not have the technical expertise needed to handle these types of contracts. For example, on a \$200,000 INL construction contract there were indications of possible weaknesses or even improprieties in the contracting process related to contractor qualifications. There were allegations that the contractor was not licensed and certified to do business. The contract was breached by virtue of poor workmanship, incompleteness of work, damage to, and improper alteration of, existing structures, failure to comply with contract time requirements, and other serious allegations.

The Office of the Procurement Executive regional desk officer advised the staff to only provide procurement services to NALES for program requirements valued at less than \$15,000. INL Washington is the office staffed to handling high value (over \$15,000) contracts. Other options for the INL section are fee based contracting services offered by the Regional Procurement Support Offices.

**Recommendation 9:** Embassy Dushanbe should only provide contracting services for program items valued at less than \$15,000 for Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement programs in accordance with Office of Procurement Executive guidance. (Action: Embassy Dushanbe)

## Inventory and Warehousing

All storage facilities are inadequate. The warehouse built on the NEC is too small to store all required supplies and equipment. Half of the warehouse is used for repair and maintenance shops. Additional vertical shelving is needed so that items can be stored on upper levels taking advantage of the height of the warehouse.

The U.S. government-owned Michurina warehouse is located on a compound 20 minutes away from the NEC. Not only is the location inconvenient, but the building is structurally unsound because of earthquake damage. Because the building was once a school house the configuration is poor and is not suitable for the storage of supplies. In 2002, a prefabricated tin building was erected on this compound for storage of larger items.

There are many items in the Michurina warehouse that need to be disposed of either through sale or disposal action. Items to be disposed of include: expired beer and wine, old public affairs posters and photos, gas ranges, broken electric appliances, motor vehicle parts, vehicles, and some expendable supplies. In some cases, reserve inventories including obsolete items exceed reasonable and justifiable quantities. An auction of obsolete supplies would bring in needed funding and reduce the number of supplies in storage.

The mission uses about 34 containers as storage for supplies and parts. There are another four storage containers next to the NEC warehouse and three more secure storage containers located behind this warehouse. The general services section conducted an inventory of 15 of these containers and entered over 553 stock items into the property records system. The contents of the 19 remaining containers on the lot also require an inventory. Upon inspection, some of these containers store



low value items that are obsolete and should be disposed. The remaining containers have replacement parts and supplies for the NEC. Although these containers are locked and are under regional security officer supervision and oversight, the contents should also be recorded in the property records system to provide accountability.

The OIG team discussed with the general services officer short-term and long-term strategies for coping with warehousing and inventory issues. Until the construction of a new warehouse is approved and built, the general services section should pursue leasing a warehouse that meets mission security and safety requirements. Storage requirements should be based on the availability of supplies and equipment both locally and in the region. To illustrate, electric appliances including dryers, washers, ranges, and refrigerators can be purchased locally thereby eliminating storage requirements and allowing easy access to parts and service.

Automobile parts for other than American made vehicles can be procured and delivered in one to two weeks via surface transport from Middle East suppliers. Ideally, only supplies requiring long transit time would be stored in the warehouse. Supply consumption rates should be determined to allow “just-in-time” processes.

**Recommendation 10:** Embassy Dushanbe should lease a short-term leased warehouse. (Action: Embassy Dushanbe)

**Recommendation 11:** Embassy Dushanbe should identify all obsolete and unneeded items and initiate disposal actions. (Action: Embassy Dushanbe)

**Recommendation 12:** Embassy Dushanbe should inventory and record in the property management system all items located in shipping containers. (Action: Embassy Dushanbe)

**Recommendation 13:** Embassy Dushanbe should conduct a market survey and analysis to find out what nonexpendable and expendable supplies can be obtained locally and in the region. (Action: Embassy Dushanbe)

**Recommendation 14:** Embassy Dushanbe should determine the historical average demand for expendable and nonexpendable items and implement a “just-in-time” inventory procedure that reduces storage requirements. (Action: Embassy Dushanbe)

## Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations Inventory Management

There are allegations of waste, fraud, theft, and mismanagement throughout the entire construction phase of the NEC. Several interviewees say that weak internal controls led to the rampant loss of building materials. Interviewees also allege that building material storage containers were left unlocked, giving construction workers and local guards unsupervised access to their contents. Property management inventories, material requisitions, and storage container shipping manifests were either lost or not recorded. Property management records that exist are purported to be in the possession of the original contractor (subsequently debarred) or at OBO’s Washington office. The amount of loss due to theft is unknown. Without storage container manifests, inventories, or other property records it is unlikely that the amount of loss can be determined.

Upon completion of the NEC, OBO transferred custodianship of surplus construction materials and 124 storage containers to the mission. The transfer of property was done without any property management records that identified the amount or type of construction materials. In May 2006, the general services section started to consolidate, inventory, and dispose of residual building materials and scrap. Thus far, 90 empty containers and other building materials have been sold at multiple auctions generating proceeds of \$61,700. There are still 34 storage containers remaining. Assumption of these property management duties has placed a significant strain on the general services staff.

## Motor Pool Operations

Motor pool services are supplemented by contract services. A local taxi company provides transportation services, and bills the mission monthly. When vehicles are working properly, the motor pool provides adequate service to its customers. Because many of the vehicles are five years old, mechanical problems are more frequent. The repair of American made vehicles is a big problem because it can take six to nine months to get parts, compounded by the unfamiliarity of mechanics with American made cars. All of these problems translate into vehicles being nonoperational for months at a time. This had been a significant problem for the

mobile patrol force. Russian and Japanese made vehicles are the norm in Tajikistan, and vehicle parts are available on the local market. The ICASS council has authority to purchase foreign made vehicles, but the Bureau of Administration has to approve and fund the purchase of foreign made program vehicles. The mission would like a long-term waiver to purchase foreign manufactured vehicles but has not submitted any paper work to request a such a waiver in accordance with 14 FAM 418.8-3 (C).

Motor pool records management needs to be improved. Motor pool records such as daily use records, accountability, and maintenance records and reports, as well as motor vehicle inventories are not well organized. In some instances these records are not being completed. Use of electronic software designed for motor pool applications would improve record keeping.

The fuel tanks are above ground and are, therefore, less secure and safe than if underground. To enhance security and to prevent theft, the general services officer is planning to put a metal cage around the fuel tanks. The general services officer has already developed a standard operating procedure for fuel deliveries and disbursements including an electronic log.

Five vehicles used by the maintenance staff are over 17 years old and require replacement. ICASS funding for replacement vehicles has not been adequate to fund the purchase of vehicles.

The Ambassador's official vehicle is not utilized. The 2002 armored Cadillac sedan is not appropriate for the bad roads in Tajikistan. The Ambassador has requested a replacement vehicle. The Ambassador's official car should be shipped to a post that would make better use of it.

**Recommendation 15:** Embassy Dushanbe, in coordination with the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, should ship the Ambassador's designated official car to a post with a road infrastructure more suitable for this type of vehicle. (Action: Embassy Dushanbe, in coordination with DS)

## Facilities Maintenance

The small maintenance unit is kept busy with the routine maintenance of government- owned properties and short-term leased properties. The staff is in the process of correcting punch list items. The staff will be burdened with correcting the many design flaws identified in the security annex of this report and real property section of this report. Because the staff's focus has been on correcting leftover building issues and housing make readies, the unit has not had time to implement a comprehensive routine and preventative maintenance plan. Informal recommendations were made.

## Safety Health Environmental Management

In August 2007, OBO's safety inspectors conducted a site visit. The safety inspection report identified 26 deficiencies with over 40 recommendations that require corrective action. The facilities manager, also the post health and occupation safety officer, is working to correct these deficiencies. Per OBO guidelines, the facilities manager is required to submit to OBO periodic status reports about corrective action taken to resolve and close these recommendations.

As stated in the Chief of Mission annual certification, the occupation safety and health officer has not reviewed and certified that all residences meet Department safety, health, and environmental standards. During a housing tour of several residences, members of the OIG team noted that fire extinguishers were not always located in obvious locations. Also, in some of the larger houses, fire extinguishers were not located on the second floor. In the Ambassador's house, there is an empty marble plunge pool located behind a 1st floor bathroom. Access to this area should be restricted and locked during official receptions if children are in attendance.

**Recommendation 16:** Embassy Dushanbe should conduct an inspection and certify that all residences meet the Department's safety, health, and environmental standards. (Action: Embassy Dushanbe)

## Travel

Previous general services officers were unable to establish a General Services Administration travel management center in Dushanbe. The effort was unnecessary. At the time of the inspection, the internal travel unit had the highest ICASS customer service scores exceeding the SCA bureau and worldwide averages. The internal travel unit provides better customer service than most travel management centers established under the General Services Administration umbrella contract.

## HUMAN RESOURCES

The human resources unit needs greater management attention. Several major areas need to be addressed. These include a new salary survey, implementation of a leave plan that would be in accordance with Tajik law, establishment of procedures to adequately store sensitive personal information, completion and issuance of a current LE staff handbook, preparation and submission of a retail price survey, (b) (2) (b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)

Embassy Dushanbe qualifies for a 15 percent service needs differential if Department employees agree to serve a third year. The embassy, to its credit, highlighted repeatedly to the Department the need to raise the 40 percent overall cap on hardship allowances because there is minimal service needs differential incentive for officers to seek positions in Dushanbe where employees already receive a 35 percent hardship allowance.

The Department, citing concerns from the field and regional bureaus on November 20, 2007, removed the cap (State 158629).

## The Compensation Package

The local compensation plan effective October 14, 2007 provides for an improved medical plan and a temporary basic retirement plan, but there is no provision for salary increases nor does the leave plan comply with local labor law. (b) (2) (b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2) (b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2) There has not been a salary increase since 2003. Dushanbe was once a relatively inexpensive place to live and work; however inflation has started to impact the cost of living over the past two years. The cost of a staple such as bread doubled in October, and fuel and utility costs have increased substantially.

Salary surveys are conducted for the Department by the UN Development Program (UNDP) organization in country. The UNDP uses only six organizations as comparators in order to determine the size of the compensation package and only surveys diplomatic and international organizations such as the World Bank. None match the organizational size and structure of the embassy, with almost 300 locally hired employees. Therefore, the usage of these comparators casts doubt on the accuracy of the comparison of prevailing practices. While embassy employees have not had an increase since 2003, UNDP general staff have received increases of three percent in 2004; 23 percent in 2005, and two percent in 2006.

**Recommendation 17:** Embassy Dushanbe should request the Bureau of Human Resources to select another vendor for the salary surveys in order to analyze a larger number of comparator entities that are more similar in size to the embassy staff. (Action: Embassy Dushanbe, in coordination with DGHR)

**Recommendation 18:** Embassy Dushanbe should conduct a new salary review upon the selection of a new vendor. (Action: Embassy Dushanbe, in coordination with DGHR)

### Noncompliance with Tajikistan Labor Law

The embassy's pregnancy and maternity leave benefit is not consistent with Department regulations (3 FAM 7312.3 and 3 FAH-2 H-212 A&D) or the local labor law. Article 164 of the Republic of Tajikistan Labor Code provides for maternity leave of 72 calendar days before childbirth and 70 after. Article 167 provides for child nursing breaks. In 1995, the Department required all posts to adopt locally prevailing leave benefits. Several Foreign Affairs Manual sections indicate the Department's clear intention for U.S. embassies to implement prevailing practices, with very few exceptions. The Department's leave policy, delineated in 3 FAM 7432b, states that "...overseas establishments must adopt locally prevailing leave benefits in lieu of any benefits patterned after the provisions of the Annual and Sick Leave Act." Embassy Dushanbe has not implemented the local leave plan. The LE staff are still under the U.S. leave system.

**Recommendation 19:** Embassy Dushanbe, in coordination with the Bureau of Human Resources, should implement a leave plan consistent with the Republic of Tajikistan Labor Code to include maternity leave and child nursing breaks. (Action: Embassy Dushanbe, in coordination with DGHR)

## Storage of Personal Sensitive Information

Although post working files of U.S. citizen employees must be maintained separately from folders of LE staff, the LE staff in the management section had ready access to personal sensitive information. Files were kept in a key lock file cabinet in an outer office area, and the key for the cabinet was retained by a local national employee. The information in the files included current evaluation reports for Foreign Service officers and financial disclosure statements for American employees assigned to the embassy. Procedures and proscriptions for access to performance records are delineated in 3 FAH-1. The same requirements for proper storage of personnel records cited in 3 FAH-1 H-2355.4 apply to post files. According to 3 FAH-1 H-2355.4a, the personal and sensitive information contained in official personnel folders requires the same physical protection in handling and storage as classified material.

When the OIG team disclosed this weakness, the files in question were moved to the management officer's office. However, the files were still being maintained in a key lock file cabinet. A more secure container, preferably a safe, is needed.

**Recommendation 20:** Embassy Dushanbe should place the personal sensitive files in a secure combination lock container under the control of an American officer. (Action: Embassy Dushanbe)

## The Locally Employed Staff Handbook

The LE staff handbook is woefully out of date and incomplete. The handbook, in effect, was made effective September 25, 1995. Since that time, the LE staff has increased 10 fold. Policies and procedures for EEO as they pertain to LE staff, for example, are missing. A new handbook was in process at the time of the inspection. This handbook also does not fully describe EEO policies and procedures. Discussion is limited to sexual harassment. Grievance procedures are unclear in the draft handbook.







difficulty recovering about \$500,000 in ICASS funds that post had deobligated from the Department. There appeared to be some confusion as to whether the Bureau of European Affairs, SCA, or the Bureau of Resource Management, or any combination of the three, had the funds that should be allotted back to the embassy.

### International Cooperative Administrative Support Services

Overall, ICASS is functioning well. The embassy provides adequate administrative services to eight agencies. The ICASS council meets regularly and on an ad hoc basis as needed. Relations among agencies are professional and productive. There is no unnecessary duplication of administrative services.

Although ICASS standards have been revised recently, the ICASS council has no system in place to monitor compliance with established standards. Monitoring is crucial to improving administrative services and customer relations. The OIG team informally suggested that the mission designate a quality assurance monitor for each management section, or hire a quality assurance monitor. The quality assurance monitor could be a local hire or eligible family member.

The ICASS council is not involved in NSDD-38 requests. Also, it is unaware of its role and responsibility in the NSDD-38 process. The OIG team made informal recommendations to correct these deficiencies.

## INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND INFORMATION SECURITY

Embassy Dushanbe operates a satisfactory information management (IM) program that meets the essential support functions for the embassy. The IM unit is staffed by two American specialists, both arrived just prior to the start of the inspection. One is an information management officer on a six-month bridge assignment, and the other (the information program officer) is a Civil Service employee on an excursion tour. They are responsible for the maintenance, security, and operation of the unclassified network, the dedicated Internet network, and the operations, security, and maintenance of the classified network, telephone, and radio communications, switchboard operations, and pouch services. Classified pouch service is problematic due to the lack of an authorized carrier and/or tarmac access rights with neighboring countries. Presently, classified pouch service is only available through support flights (military), and a nonpro courier (limited to hand-carry items).

The newly arrived specialists have several major obstacles to overcome. These include a lack of documentation and standard operating procedures covering such basic IM tasks as: setting-up of new accounts, creating disk images for both the unclassified and classified workstations, and system backup. There is no system security plan or contingency plan. There is no institutional memory. Although there was coverage by personnel assigned on TDY, the staffing gap of several months took a toll. The TDY staff operated in a haphazard, unstructured manner, with very little focus on tidiness when accomplishing their work. The general disarray of the classified IM section was evident the first day the OIG team arrived and opened the door to the IM equipment closet in the classified section. Equipment was piled on top of other boxes, computer parts and old vendor manuals were thrown in boxes in no organized fashion. The general mess in the IM equipment closet was also indicative of a much larger problem of disorder that had spread throughout the unit – most noticeably in the classified section.

The newly arrived staff has initiated corrective action. The information management officer deserves particular praise for tackling several unfinished projects, including Cable Xpress access, requesting the regional information management center's assistance to troubleshoot the post's telephone problems, and taking the initiative to create required documentation for the IM section.

## Documentation

Embassy Dushanbe does not have essential systems documentation and standard operating procedures for its networks and systems. Specifically, the embassy does not have documentation detailing procedures for completing IM functions, such as backup procedures, creating new user and e-mail accounts, and creating disk images for both its unclassified and classified workstations. Per 12 FAM 622 and 12 FAM 632, the information management officer, in conjunction with the system owner, should develop required systems documentation for all systems. Systems security plans should be updated annually or when major modifications are made to the systems

**Recommendation 25:** Embassy Dushanbe should complete all required systems documentation, including system security plans, contingency plans, and standard operating procedures. (Action: Embassy Dushanbe)



## QUALITY OF LIFE

### HEALTH UNIT

Tajikistan lacks hospitals that meet western standards. Although there are medical facilities capable of stabilizing patients in emergencies, none are adequate for hospitalization. Hospitals are only used in cases of life and death. Most American embassy staff must be evacuated for serious medical problems. Between April and October 2007, there were five medical evacuations to the United States, London, and Istanbul. The section is staffed by a Foreign Service health practitioner and a part-time locally hired physician. There also is a Tajik doctor who works at a local hospital and serves as the unit's medical advisor. Dushanbe's medical unit receives support from the regional medical psychiatrist and regional medical technician, both based in Moscow, as well as yearly visits from regional medical manager based in Brussels and quarterly visits from the regional medical officer assigned to Almaty.

Individual's medical records are stored in locked cabinets. All controlled drugs are properly maintained and stored, and records are kept showing supply and disposition. The medical unit's treatment workload has been increasing as more eligible family members come to post. Much of this additional workload has involved the treatment of childhood illnesses and diseases. Dushanbe's water supply is unsafe, and the last water quality test reported a high bacterial count. The embassy provides water distillers to all residences.

The unit's physical layout is not entirely adequate to handle patient workflow. There are only two treatment rooms, one office, and a small storage area for drugs and medical equipment. The unit lacks an appropriate waiting/reception area. While every effort is made to avoid scheduling several patients simultaneously, there are still times when there are additional walk-in patients. Currently, all patients must wait in a small kitchen area that serves as a mini-laboratory as well as the unit's waiting room. The Foreign Service health practitioner advised that there was one emergency situation when a patient had to be treated in this kitchen/mini-lab/waiting room as both treatment rooms were occupied.

**Recommendation 26:** Embassy Dushanbe should add and/or reconfigure the medical unit's space to create a separate reception/waiting area. (Action: Embassy Dushanbe).

## Avian Influenza

There have been no reported cases of human Avian Influenza in Tajikistan. The Department has provided drugs and medical supplies for the embassy community should there be an outbreak of Avian Influenza.

## COMMUNITY LIAISON OFFICE

The community liaison office (CLO) has an active program that received good support. The community liaison office coordinator works 20 hours per week. She manages the sponsor program for newcomers and provides important information to embassy staff and their family members via e-mail notices. The CLO coordinator arranges many activities for families with children, single adults, and couples without children. These activities include welcome parties, hikes, city walking tours, bowling, and visits to museums and artists studios. The CLO coordinator also serves on the emergency action committee, interagency housing board, post employment committee and attends country team and administrative staff meetings. The embassy plans to hire a second part-time community liaison office coordinator to handle the office's increasing workload. With two coordinators, it should be possible for the CLO to publish a weekly embassy newsletter.

## MANAGEMENT CONTROLS

The Chief of Mission Certification of management controls submitted on June 30, 2007, identified one material control weakness. The mission occupation safety and health officer has not reviewed and certified that all residences meet Department safety, health, and environmental standards. Another chief of mission concern is the potential for fraud at the mission. During the past year, 24 employees were dismissed for their involvement in fuel theft. Several other fraud investigations are pending. At the time of inspection, fraud was alleged to have occurred in many sections of the embassy. These deficiencies have been discussed in earlier sections of this report. The OIG team identified several management control weaknesses.

### Premium Class Travel

Controls over the use of premium travel are in place. Business class tickets issued were for travel in excess of 14 hours and were properly authorized using form DS-4087, Authorization Request for Business Class Air Travel. The embassy did not issue any first class tickets during this period.





## FORMAL RECOMMENDATIONS

**Recommendation 1:** Embassy Dushanbe should implement procedures establishing a formal notification to front office management of disciplinary counseling sessions. (Action: Embassy Dushanbe)

**Recommendation 2:** Embassy Dushanbe should install a bell or buzzer on the access door to the consular work area. (Action: Embassy Dushanbe)

**Recommendation 3:** Embassy Dushanbe, in coordination with the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, should identify all design flaws and develop a corrective action plan prioritizing projects based on urgency, the degree of structural modification required, the funding needed, and obtain the necessary Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations approvals before modifications are made. (Action: Embassy Dushanbe, in coordination with OBO)

**Recommendation 4:** Embassy Dushanbe should request, and the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations should approve, the commission of a real estate market survey to determine the market value of the Michurina facility and former chancery. (Action: Embassy Dushanbe, in coordination with OBO)

**Recommendation 5:** Embassy Dushanbe should prepare and submit to the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations for approval, a lower cost and smaller scale proposal as a regular capital project that incorporates proceeds from the sale of the Michurina facility and former chancery. (Action: Embassy Dushanbe)

**Recommendation 6:** Embassy Dushanbe, in coordination with the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, should lease and designate an official residence for the deputy chief of mission. (Action: Embassy Dushanbe, in coordination with OBO)

**Recommendation 7:** Embassy Dushanbe should request, and the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs should approve, official residence expenses for the deputy chief of mission. (Action: Embassy Dushanbe, in coordination with SCA)

**Recommendation 8:** The Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs, in coordination with the Bureau of Human Resources, should establish a financial management/human resources officer position in Embassy Dushanbe. (Action: SCA, in coordination with DGHR)

**Recommendation 9:** Embassy Dushanbe should only provide contracting services for program items valued at less than \$15,000 for Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement programs in accordance with Office of Procurement Executive guidance. (Action: Embassy Dushanbe)

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**Recommendation 15:** Embassy Dushanbe, in coordination with the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, should ship the Ambassador’s designated official car to a post with a road infrastructure more suitable for this type of vehicle. (Action: Embassy Dushanbe, in coordination with DS)

**Recommendation 16:** Embassy Dushanbe should conduct an inspection and certify that all residences meet the Department’s safety, health, and environmental standards. (Action: Embassy Dushanbe)

**Recommendation 17:** Embassy Dushanbe should request the Bureau of Human Resources to select another vendor for the salary surveys in order to analyze a larger number of comparator entities that are more similar in size to the embassy staff. (Action: Embassy Dushanbe, in coordination with DGHR)





## 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.

### Equal Employment Opportunity

The mission has not designated and publicized the designation of a Federal Women's Program coordinator in accordance with 3 FAM 1514.2a.

**Informal Recommendation 1:** Embassy Dushanbe should designate and publicize the designation of a Federal Women's Program coordinator.

A new EEO counselor has been designated, but the EEO bulletin board has not been updated to reflect the change of EEO counselor.

**Informal Recommendation 2:** Embassy Dushanbe should update the Equal Employment Opportunity bulletin board to reflect the change of Equal Employment Opportunity counselor.

### Procurement

Embassy Dushanbe uses Excel spreadsheets and manual processes to track procurements.

**Informal Recommendation 3:** Embassy Dushanbe should install WebPass software and provide staff training on its use.

Embassy Dushanbe does not have a comprehensive procurement plan that includes a year end spending plan.

**Informal Recommendation 4:** Embassy Dushanbe should develop a comprehensive procurement plan.

Some staff complain that unclassified and secure procurements take too long.

**Informal Recommendation 5:** Embassy Dushanbe should issue an administrative notice reminding staff about the length of time and staff requirements involved in unclassified and secure procurements.

When there are delays in processing procurement requests, the procurement section is not letting customers know when goods and services will arrive.

**Informal Recommendation 6:** Embassy Dushanbe should provide customer service training to the procurement staff.

The procurement unit frequently receives incomplete procurement requests.

**Informal Recommendation 7:** Embassy Dushanbe should redesign its procurement request form highlighting required fields of information.

The procurement section does not monitor its compliance with International Cooperative Administrative Support Services standards.

**Informal Recommendation 8:** Embassy Dushanbe should expand the procurement sections duties to include compliance with International Cooperative Administrative Support Services.

There are inefficiencies in the interaction between procurement and other management units. For example, obtaining funding for good and services has caused some delays.

**Informal Recommendation 9:** Embassy Dushanbe should develop procedures in coordination with other management section in order to facilitate quicker procurements for goods and services.

### Personal Property Management

The general services officer, who is the accountable property officer, has not conducted periodic, unannounced spot counts of expendable and nonexpendable property as required by 14 FAM 411.2-2 (c).

**Informal Recommendation 10:** Embassy Dushanbe should perform periodic spot checks of expendable and nonexpendable inventories.

## Housing

The cost to prepare short-term lease residences for occupancy exceeds the \$5,000 ceiling specified in 15 FAM 162.2 (d) and 15 FAM 313.1.

**Informal Recommendation 11:** Embassy Dushanbe should prepare a justification for exceeding the \$5,000 make ready cost ceiling and apply for release from the limitation.

Embassy Dushanbe does not track the cost involved to prepare Department held short-term leased residential properties for occupancy nor does it include the justification and accounting in lease files in accordance with 15 FAM 162.2 (d).

**Informal Recommendation 12:** Embassy Dushanbe should track the cost involved to prepare Department held short-term leased properties for occupancy and include this documentation in lease files.

Embassy Dushanbe has not conducted an annual housing market survey, required by 15 FAM 212.6.

**Informal Recommendation 13:** Embassy Dushanbe should conduct an annual housing market survey.

Lease files do not contain certifications that residential properties meet Department safety, health, and environmental requirements nor do they contain the Department's residential safety, health, and fire prevention awareness checklists in accordance with 15 FAM 312.6.

**Informal Recommendation 14:** Embassy Dushanbe should following Department safety, health, and environmental requirements requiring certification that residential properties meet Department safety, health, and environmental guidelines.

**Informal Recommendation 15:** Embassy Dushanbe should include in residential lease files safety, health, and fire prevention awareness checklists.

## Motor Pool

In a few instances, drivers did not perform daily inspections and document them on Form 108, Daily Vehicle Use Record, which must be maintained for all vehicles at post. The form must be completed on a daily basis by the employee operating or servicing the vehicle. The responsible officer or employee should review Form OF-108 weekly. This is in accordance with 14 FAM 418.6-1.

**Informal Recommendation 16:** Embassy Dushanbe should implement a policy requiring that all drivers complete the daily inspection form daily before drivers are allowed to operate motor vehicles.

In a few instances, accountability, use, and maintenance records, including records of fuel and lubricants used, were not updated in accordance with 14 FAM 418.7.1.

**Informal Recommendation 17:** Embassy Dushanbe should implement a policy requiring that all maintenance records, including fuel and lubricants used, be kept on file.

According to mission motor vehicle inventory records, the Bureau of Administration's Dushanbe fleet inventory records printout is incorrect. Per 14 FAM 418.7-2, the post must annotate any corrections directly on the printout, sign the printout, and return the signed inventory printout to the Bureau of Administration.

**Informal Recommendation 18:** Embassy Dushanbe should make and annotate corrections on the fleet inventory records printout, sign the printout, and send the signed inventory to the Bureau of Administration.

### International Cooperative Administrative Support Services

Although the embassy established its ICASS service performance standards, these are not integrated as part of daily management operations, nor are they monitored on a regular basis or included in local staff performance evaluations.

**Informal Recommendation 19:** Embassy Dushanbe should monitor compliance with International Cooperative Administrative Support Services standards and use the results as a management tool to improve customer service.

**Informal Recommendation 20:** Embassy Dushanbe should include compliance with International Cooperative Administrative Support Services standards as an element in performance evaluations.

The ICASS council does not understand its role and responsibility for advising the Chief of Mission on cost implications of NSDD-38 requests and making recommendations on ICASS staffing levels per Department's guidance, Action Request and Guidance for Chief of Mission NSDD-38 Requests.



**Informal Recommendation 21:** Embassy Dushanbe should distribute National Security Decision Directive-38 guidance and train International Cooperative Administrative Support Services council members on developing cost impacts for National Security Decision Directive-38 requests.



## PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS

<b>Officer</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Arrival Date</b>
Ambassador	Tracey Jacobson	08/06
Deputy Chief of Mission	Thomas Hushek	07/06

### **Chiefs of Sections:**

Management	David Schafer	09/07
Consular	Gregory Pflieger	02/07
Political/Economic	Mathew Purl	09/07
Public Affairs	Jacqueline McKennan	09/07
Regional Security	Seth Green	06/06

### **Other Agencies:**

Defense Attaché	Daniel Green	12/06
Legal Attaché	Kim Lindquist	03/07
Office of Defense Cooperation	Kelsey Harris-Smith	08/05
U.S. Agency for International Development	Caroline Bryan	08/07
U.S. Department of Justice	Steven Bennett	10/07



## ABBREVIATIONS

BLEWG	Border and Law Enforcement Working Group
CAA	Controlled Access Area
DCM	Deputy chief of mission
DEA	Drug Enforcement Administration
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunity
ELO	Entry-level officer
EXBS	Export Control and Related Border Security
IBRS	Internet-Based Registration Service
ICASS	International Cooperative Administrative Support Services
IM	Information Management
INL	Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement
LE	Locally employed
MSP	Mission Strategic Plan
NALES	Narcotics and Law Enforcement Section
NEC	New embassy compound
NGO	Nongovernmental organization
OBO	Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations
OIG	Office of Inspector General
PD	Public diplomacy
P/E	Political / Economic
SCA	Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs
SLEA	Senior Law Enforcement Advisor

TDY	Temporary duty assignment
UNDP	UN Development Program
UNHCR	UN High Commissioner for Refugees

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