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

# Report of Inspection

Embassy Rabat, and  
Consulate General  
Casablanca, Morocco

Report Number ISP-I-08-04A, December 2007

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## KEY JUDGMENTS

- The embassy is managing well a major increase in the bilateral U.S.-Moroccan relationship in counterterrorism, political, economic, trade, security, and public diplomacy.
- Communication within the embassy needs to be increased in order to assure maximum coordination of mission goals and programs.
- The embassy's political and economic reporting is timely, nuanced, and insightful, drawing upon extensive contact networks. Washington readers award it high marks for both focus and depth of coverage.
- Embassy Rabat is a flagship for new U.S. public diplomacy efforts to counter Islamic extremism overseas. However, full implementation of its innovative public diplomacy strategy will hinge on additional funding.
- Inordinate staffing gaps in key positions and poor job performances by some American supervisors led to poor delivery of key administrative services.
- Embassy Rabat and Consulate General Casablanca coordinate well and closely on business and commercial, security, consular, public diplomacy, and management issues.
- The International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB), Morocco Transmitting Station, is well managed and provides broadcasting and technical services to Europe, the Middle East, and Africa, but as IBB faces budget constraints, the station faces possible reduced operations or closure.
- The Office of Inspector General (OIG) team was unable to evaluate the merits of closure of the IBB facility without an examination of worldwide broadcast policy goals and the technical means to achieve them. OIG's report *Inspection of the International Broadcasting Bureau's Morocco Transmitting Station*, ISP-IB-08-05, recommends that IBB, together with other stakeholders, should prepare a careful worldwide study of the future targets of U.S. broadcasting, residual value of property and equipment, closeout costs, the potential need for contingency shortwave broadcasting operations, and technical issues of propagation of radio waves prior to making an irreversible decision to close the Morocco transmitting station.

The inspection took place in Washington, DC, between April 9 and 29, 2007; in Rabat, Morocco, between May 1 and 24, 2007; in Casablanca, Morocco, between May 7 and 11, 2007, and in Tangiers, Morocco, between May 14 and 15, 2007. Ambassador Joseph Sullivan (team leader), Moosa Valli (deputy team leader), Craig Cheney, Bohdan Dmytrewycz, Zandra Flemister, Thomas Martin, Janis Scorpio, Robert Torres, William Urbanski, and Roman Zawada conducted the inspection.

## CONTEXT



Morocco, a country roughly the size of California, is situated in the northwest corner of the African continent. Its coastline runs along the Atlantic Ocean to the Strait of Gibraltar and then reaches into the Mediterranean. Bordering Morocco on the east is Algeria. To the south lies Western Sahara, which Morocco has occupied since 1975. Morocco has a population of 33 million people, with a per capita in-

come of nearly \$4,500, though poverty and unemployment are widespread. Tourism is the largest foreign exchange earner, followed by remittances from overseas Moroccan workers, textiles, and phosphates.

The Moroccan-American Treaty of Friendship, signed by John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, is one of the oldest U.S. treaties, having been in continuous effect since 1786. The U.S. legation in Tangiers, which now houses a museum, was among the first overseas properties owned by the U.S. government.

In 1956, Morocco regained its independence from France and became a constitutional monarchy with an elected parliament. In 1975, Morocco occupied the Western Sahara, following Spain's withdrawal after five decades of occupation. The status of that territory remains unresolved after extended armed resistance by local tribesmen – supported by neighboring Algeria – and protracted U.N.-sponsored international negotiations. With active U.S. encouragement, Morocco has put forward a promising new autonomy proposal that may lead to a breakthrough in the search for a solution. In May 2003, Casablanca, Morocco's largest city, suffered from terrorist attacks that left 33 people dead. In April 2007, suicide bombers blew themselves up in Casablanca, one across the street from the consulate general. The United States and Morocco cooperate closely on counterterrorism issues.

Morocco has emerged as the closest ally to the United States in North Africa, working with the United States during the Cold War and supporting efforts to promote peace in the Middle East. Morocco is a major “non-North Atlantic Treaty Organization ally” and for years has been a regular contributor of troops to U.N. peacekeeping operations around the world. The United States has been a steadfast partner in pursuing a broad-based domestic reform agenda. A bilateral Free Trade Agreement, which was implemented in January 2006, has led to significant economic reforms, stimulating a significant increase in trade between the two countries and encouraging major new foreign investment in Morocco. Through the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI), the United States is also supporting a wide range of civil society initiatives to strengthen democracy. A Millennium Challenge Compact, which is on track for signature later in 2007, could translate into as much as \$700 million in additional economic reform assistance over a five-year period.

The mission is staffed by 400 employees, including 118 Americans of which 63 are Department of State (Department) employees. The mission, including the embassy in Rabat, the consulate general in Casablanca, and the IBB transmitting station in Tangiers includes, representatives of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), IBB, the Peace Corps, the Defense attaché office (DAO), the office of Defense cooperation (ODC), the U.S. Foreign and Commercial Service (USFCS), the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Foreign Agricultural Service, and the Force Protection Detachment of the Department of Defense. The Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) is in the process of establishing a small office.

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTION

The Ambassador brings a wealth of private business experience, including international business experience in Europe and Africa, to his position and has served over three years as Ambassador to Morocco. He maintains a generally low-key approach in public and in the embassy community but invites American and Moroccan employees to his home, and his participation in community events is appreciated. The Ambassador maintains a very active representational schedule throughout Morocco where he participates in Peace Corps, USAID, nongovernmental organization, and business community events on a frequent basis. His interest in, and knowledge of business and trade issues make him very sought after in the business community. He frequently addresses business groups and visits business operations in Casablanca and throughout the country. He has actively and effectively promoted American business investment and trade opportunities in Morocco and engaged directly in negotiations for the successful conclusion of a Free Trade Agreement and a Millennium Challenge Compact with Morocco, both of which required major economic reforms by Morocco and flexibility on the part of U.S. negotiators. The Ambassador took advantage of his high-level contacts in the United States and Moroccan government to promote progress on these agreements.

The Ambassador follows closely, and supports the development of strong cooperative relations with the government of Morocco on counterterrorism, a relationship that extends across many U.S. agencies and embassy offices. Following the April 2007 suicide bombings near the consulate general in Casablanca, he engaged with the American community in Rabat and Casablanca to provide information and listen to their concerns. In addition, he urged the government of Morocco to take the necessary security measures to allow the reopening of the consulate general building. The Ambassador also used his high-level contacts in the United States and Morocco to promote progress on the longstanding Western Sahara dispute and pushed successfully for Morocco to take a flexible approach in its autonomy proposal.

While maintaining positive personal relations with American and Moroccan embassy personnel, the Ambassador has left most of the day-to-day management of the embassy to the deputy chief of mission (DCM). The Ambassador and DCM meet weekly with senior staff and monthly with an expanded country team. Many embassy employees believe they do not have sufficient feedback from, or communication



with, the Ambassador and DCM. The OIG team found the morale of American and Moroccan embassy employees mixed and that there was some uncertainty about the Ambassador's and DCM's interest in morale.

The second-time DCM has been the mainstay of internal embassy operations in a conscious division of labor with the Ambassador. He meets frequently with every agency and section head to review all pending issues. He brings his career-long knowledge of Department procedures and issues to the job and has had to play a very active role to compensate for staffing gaps and a curtailment in the management section. The Ambassador and DCM visit embassy offices periodically, but more would be better.

The Ambassador and DCM are strong advocates of public diplomacy. They do a substantial amount of public speaking, encourage embassy personnel to engage in conventional and unconventional settings, and have promoted an innovative approach to public diplomacy outreach.

The Ambassador, DCM, and experienced principal officer at the consulate general in Casablanca have worked well together to assure that the embassy and the consulate general collaborate effectively. With Casablanca, the larger city and business center, only 90 minutes away, close cooperation is critical on many fronts, including public diplomacy and outreach, business and commercial, political, management, and security. Because Consulate General Casablanca has consular responsibility for all of Morocco, consular issues also require close cooperation. The principal officer of the consulate general participates in weekly embassy meetings; the Ambassador visits Casablanca frequently; and the embassy takes good advantage of the principal officer's substantial Middle East experience. The April 2007 bombings outside the consulate general in Casablanca necessitated very close collaboration between the embassy and the consulate on a variety of issues. The coordination was close and effective, and, where there were differences, they were resolved through consultation.

## SECURITY PROGRAMS

The executive direction of the U.S. mission in Morocco takes into account the importance of security in the environment where mission employees and families work and live. The Ambassador and the DCM give careful consideration to the security concerns of the regional security officers (RSO) and the embassy community as a whole before making decisions that affect the well-being of individuals.

## ENTRY-LEVEL OFFICERS AND EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The embassy and the consulate general collaborate closely to provide an excellent mentoring and career development program for entry-level officers (ELO), both generalists and specialists. The DCM meets monthly with ELOs, arranging speakers on topics of interest. The principal officer in Casablanca also meets regularly with the five ELOs assigned there and involves them in regular public diplomacy outreach activities. ELOs also accompany the Ambassador and principal officer on their official visits around the country. The embassy worked closely with the consulate general to provide useful work for consulate general ELOs during the period when the consulate general was closed. The DCM and the principal officer also discuss issues affecting the career development of ELOs and seek to find solutions to language probation and other issues they face. ELOs believed that the entry-level program had been very useful, and the OIG team encouraged them to take a strong hand in designing the entry-level program.

Embassy Rabat leadership is attentive to Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) directives and principles. There were no formal EEO complaints for the past year.

## MISSION STRATEGIC PLAN

Morocco's FY 2009 Mission Strategic Plan (MSP) was submitted shortly before the arrival of the OIG team and subjected to a digital videoconference review with the Department and other agencies during the visit of the OIG team. In the view of Department reviewers, the MSP appropriately focuses on strategic goals of countering terrorism, enhancing democracy and governance, promoting U.S.-Moroccan partnership and economic reform and growth, resolving regional conflicts, maintaining close strategic cooperation, and enhancing management support for mission goals. The MSP sets forth an ambitious set of activities to achieve these goals. The DCM noted that the MSP was a much more flexible and more compact instrument for identifying mission goals and activities than previous planning tools.

The Ambassador holds an annual off-site team-building exercise among new and returning senior staff to encourage collaborative goal setting and work, a session his staff appreciated greatly. But recognizing the often transitory nature of an MSP exercise and the difficulty of using senior staff and country team meetings to review MSPs, the Ambassador and the DCM have established teams with mixed section

and agency participation to track and encourage progress on MSP goals. The OIG team agrees that the effort is necessary, because the work of embassy sections and agencies has often been compartmentalized. However, the goal teams are in their early days and are not yet having the desired effect of increasing communication in the mission. The OIG team informally recommended that the embassy continue its efforts to promote closer collaboration and more communication among embassy agencies and sections through goal teams and other mechanisms.

## RIGHTSIZING

National Security Decision Directive 38 (NSDD-38) outlines the process by which U.S. federal departments and agencies may propose changes to their staffing at U.S. overseas missions. In the past several years, one position has been added from the Force Protection Detachment of the National Criminal Investigative Service of the Department of Defense and another position approved for the MCC in Embassy Rabat. Two new positions have also been approved for the consulate general in Casablanca for the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) visa security unit. These requests followed the appropriate NSDD-38 procedures and were properly adjusted in size and mission through consultation with the embassy. None of these position increases have resulted in additional management or security personnel to support the additional staff. The National Criminal Investigative Service has submitted an NSDD-38 request for an additional Force Protection Detachment position, and there are suggestions that other U.S. agencies will request additional positions in the near future. The OIG team counseled the embassy to examine very carefully future requests for additional personnel in Rabat or Casablanca and to take careful account of the embassy's ability to provide such positions with space, and administrative and security support.

## POLICY AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

### POLITICAL AFFAIRS

The medium-sized political section very effectively covers the full range of political issues in Morocco, including extremism and political Islam, bilateral relations with the United States, the Western Sahara dispute, and political parties and elections. It has a wide range of contacts throughout government and civil society. The section, with three Arabic language officers, is very actively out, engaging with and steadily expanding those contacts. Washington readers award high marks to the section's reporting for focus and depth of coverage, as well as insightful comment paragraphs provided at the end of each message. The Ambassador frequently turns to the section to support the visits of high-level U.S. officials from various agencies and departments.

The political counselor coordinates preparation of the embassy's annual reporting plan. After the political and economic sections and Consulate General Casablanca have prepared individual sets of anticipated reporting, he convenes a joint review to meld the three lists. The consolidated plan includes all periodic reporting required by Congress, such as the annual human rights, religious freedom, and international narcotics control strategy reports. After approval of the plan by the DCM and Ambassador, it goes for review to the Office of Maghreb Affairs in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs. The section prepares the embassy's end-of-the-day "Rabat Notes" e-mails, which serve as mini-reporting cables to the Department. Also, a member of the section serves as program manager for several grant programs funded by the Department's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, which greatly enhances the section's collection of information used in preparation of several annual reports mandated by Congress.

In reviewing the section's reporting files, the OIG team was impressed with the quality of reporting on the Western Sahara situation, attitudes of the country's Berber (minority indigenous) population, activities of Islamist opposition parties, and preparations for parliamentary elections. In a meeting with representatives of other embassies in Rabat, the OIG team heard that of all the diplomatic missions, the American embassy is widely recognized as having the best and most comprehensive information on the Western Sahara.

The embassy's classified website – which is maintained by the political section – is regularly updated and well organized. The website contains all of the embassy's recent cable reporting, including the "Rabat Notes," as well as its classified and unclassified biographic profiles. In addition, there are convenient hyperlinks to a number of other useful sources of classified information. In short, it is one of the best classified websites that members of the OIG team had seen in the past year and a half.

The embassy is fully compliant with the requirements of the Leahy amendment, which mandates vetting of all foreign candidates nominated for training at U.S. government expense. The political section is the designated coordinator for Leahy vetting in the embassy. At present, the leading submitter of names for vetting is ODC, but from time to time the RSO and Federal Bureau of Investigation also make submissions. The political section's office management specialist, who is an eligible family member, maintains binders of hard copy requests, which goes back three years, as well as a set of electronic back-up files. After a check by the political section of the files, she prepares a cable to the Department and an officer collects appropriate clearances within the embassy. When the Department responds, a hard copy of that cable is added to the binder. The section possesses the Department's latest Leahy amendment guidance, dated April 24, 2007.

## COORDINATION OF COUNTERTERRORISM AND RELATED ACTIVITIES

Countering terrorism ranks as the embassy's number-one priority, and it stands as Goal #1 in the embassy's MSP. The April 2007 bombings in Casablanca, occurring in close proximity to the consulate general's facilities and shortly before the OIG team's arrival, served to underscore the magnitude of the threat posed by terrorism in Morocco. Coordination of the interests and efforts of concerned agencies represented in the embassy is a complex and continuous undertaking. It occurs at four levels:

- The emergency action committee, comprising wide participation from around the embassy and meeting in the event of an extraordinary threat to the embassy and its staff;
- A counterterrorism working group, including key senior members of the country team who meet as needed on sensitive policy dimensions;
- Working relationships that take place directly between sections involved in operational activities (see classified annex for further discussion of this dimension); and

- A counterterrorism goals team, bringing together representatives of sections involved in planning and implementation for counterterrorist assistance programs in Morocco (the Federal Bureau of Investigation/legal attaché, RSO, DAO, ODC, the political and economic sections, and the DCM).

The Ambassador established the counterterrorism goals team as a means to improve day-to-day coordination among the embassy staff who are directly involved in running the counterterrorism cooperation programs. The overarching objective is to prevent duplication and to ensure that resources are effectively placed and the scope of the programs to be coordinated is broad. Federal Bureau of Investigation and RSO programs presently underway, with funding from the Department's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, include fingerprint sharing, training and equipping of a bomb unit, identification of fraudulent documents, inspection procedures at airports, and establishment of a K-9 (canine detection) unit. Programs that the economic section is facilitating include a U.S. Coast Guard effort to improve security at a half dozen Moroccan ports, anti-money laundering and terrorist financing courses, and assistance in setting up a financial intelligence unit to ensure enforcement of recently passed legislation. Plans are also underway to establish an export border controls on strategic commodities program, to bolster Morocco's control of its borders, with a visit by a Washington assessment team planned for later this year.

In addition to those bilateral programs, there is a multilateral dimension to the work of the goals team. The Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Program,<sup>1</sup> a new joint interagency initiative by the U.S. military regional command (EUCOM) and the Department, remains a work in progress. Planning continues on how best to implement a multifaceted cross-Sahara regional counterterrorism assistance program, with a budget of perhaps \$160 million.<sup>2</sup> Opportunities arise with the prospect of financial support for funding innovative programs to address young people who have often been attracted to extremism and terrorism, which do not have sufficient Department or USAID funding. Challenges have come in the form of the U.S. military finding that their military counterparts lack a mandate from the Moroccan government to engage in such activities. Those opportunities and challenges further reinforce the need for the goals team to play an active coordinating role.

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<sup>1</sup> The new program evolved from the Trans-Saharan Counterterrorism Initiative. The latter was a move to build upon Operation Enduring Freedom – Sahara, an unprecedented multinational effort in 2002-03 that successfully tracked down Abdel Razzaq Al-Para, a senior al Qaeda operative.

<sup>2</sup> At the time of this inspection, it was anticipated that the Department of Defense would probably provide approximately \$80 million, i.e., 50 percent of the total funding for the Trans-Saharan Counterterrorism Initiative.

Although the goals team is a relatively new entity, all of the members of the team with whom the OIG team spoke indicated that it is an invaluable source of information and already contributing to enhanced coordination. A majority also suggested that the utility of the team – which had met only three times in the three months since its inception – would be enhanced if the group met regularly and more often. The OIG team saw merit in that suggestion and counseled that the assistant RSO – who chairs the group – schedule meetings of the counterterrorism goal team every two weeks.

Public order and national security invariably parallel – and often overlap – efforts to counteract terrorism. Two other clusters of issues occasionally merit coordination within the embassy. The first of those involves military cooperation. Although the Moroccan military is closely controlled and relatively closed to outsiders, the DAO regularly interacts with senior uniformed officials and facilitates bilateral annual exchanges, meetings of a defense consultative committee, and periodic ship visits. In turn, ODC manages very substantial U.S. military assistance to Morocco, including Foreign Military Financing, International Military Education and Training, and humanitarian efforts.<sup>3</sup> Morocco is one of the largest recipients of U.S. excess defense articles, and it has expressed interest in purchasing F-16 aircraft (see section on support for U.S. business for further discussion of the latter). To ensure coordination on such military issues, the DCM meets jointly with the DAO and ODC chiefs every week. Although the political section has considerable expertise in political-military issues and provides standing support for high-level military visitors, it is not regularly invited to the DCM’s weekly meeting with DAO and ODC. The OIG team counseled the DCM to consider including a representative of the political section, and the DCM agreed to do so. The second cluster is the broader arena of law enforcement. Here, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and RSO are, from time, to time called upon to assist in law enforcement cases involving trafficking in persons, counterfeit currency, child pornography, or drug trafficking. Working relations between the Legal Attaché and the RSO section are close and collegial, and direct coordination has proven effective.

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<sup>3</sup> <b>Type</b>	<b><u>FY '05 Allocation</u></b>	<b><u>FY '06 Actual</u></b>	<b><u>FY '07 Anticipated</u></b>
Foreign Military Financing	\$15.1 million	\$12.0 million	\$11.8 million
International Military Education & Training	\$1.92 million	\$1.85 million	\$1.80 million
Humanitarian Assistance – EUCOM	\$400,000	\$1.05 million	\$550,000

Source: Embassy Rabat

## ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

The embassy has a medium-sized economic section, which produces high-quality reporting that is very well received by the Department and consumers in other economic agencies in Washington. The section has taken the lead on two priority mission goals: expanding bilateral trade and investment by supporting the implementation of a bilateral Free Trade Agreement, which came into force in 2006, and facilitating negotiation of a Millennium Challenge Compact. The section is also a pivotal member of the embassy's team effort on behalf of American business (see section on business support). In addition, the economic section advances counterterrorism goals by facilitating Morocco's new anti-money laundering legislation and improvement of the country's port and aviation security. It also coordinates closely and effectively with USAID on programs to support Morocco's economic growth and development.

The section's role within the embassy extends well beyond the economic policy arena. This year, the counselor served as the coordinator and editor of the embassy's MSP, in addition to drafting significant portions of that document. The section's deputy chief tracks embassy-wide participation in, and support for, the activities of MEPI – the \$290 million Presidential initiative to support regional economic, political, and educational reform efforts. Morocco is the single largest recipient country of MEPI grants in North Africa. At the time of the inspection, there were 104 MEPI grants, some of them for multiple projects, in Morocco. Of that number, 36 were currently active and expected to remain so over the next 12 months. A survey that the embassy had recently conducted for the Government Accountability Office reported that 44 people in the embassy were involved in providing support to MEPI projects, and it estimated their efforts to be equivalent to the workload of eight full-time equivalents (see section on public affairs below, for further discussion of embassy support to MEPI and a formal recommendation.)

The section's mandated annual reports, especially the Investment Climate Report were especially well done. Several in-depth cables provided excellent on-the-ground economic assessments. For example, a detailed review of the World Bank's programs in Morocco provided a nuanced analysis of obstacles to development and the potential for MCC cooperation with the World Bank. Similarly, an analysis of the embassy's efforts in promoting democratic reforms in the past two years supplied Washington readers with a scorecard on what programs have been successful.



## SUPPORT FOR AMERICAN BUSINESS

The Ambassador actively encourages and strongly supports the efforts by various sections of the embassy to promote U.S. exports to and investments in Morocco:

- USFCS has an attaché assigned to Casablanca, with regional responsibilities that also include Algeria and Tunisia. He travels frequently and effectively promotes U.S. goods and services. When he travels, Casablanca's economic reporting officer covers for him. His office provides a full range of commercial services to new-to-market and small U.S. companies. The workload has jumped dramatically with implementation of the bilateral Free Trade Agreement, and USFCS has decided to shift a locally employed (LE) staff member from Rabat to Casablanca to provide better assistance to U.S. companies.
- The Foreign Agricultural Service office in Rabat works closely with other sections of the embassy to advance the sale of U.S. agricultural products in Morocco, along with Tunisia and Morocco. The primary focus is on using full implementation of the Free Trade Agreement to open new markets for U.S. commodities and processed food products.
- The economic section prepares reports such as the Investment Climate Report, which are posted on the USFCS website and widely distributed. From time to time, it also does sector reports on transportation and energy.
- The Royal Moroccan Air Force is considering the purchase of F-16 aircraft, with a formal letter of request for information. The deal could potentially be worth as much as \$2 billion. The Moroccan Air Force presently flies a collection of 40-year old Mirage F-1s and F-5s, which are difficult to maintain

ODC, working closely with USFCS, has very aggressively supported the U.S. bidder. At one point this year, when the deal appeared in serious danger because of activities by foreign competitors, the Ambassador successfully intervened with senior Moroccan officials to ensure a level playing field. At the time of the inspection, the next step appeared to be a decision by the king.

The American Chamber of Commerce in Morocco is located in Casablanca. Although relatively small compared to its French and Spanish counterparts, the Chamber is very active. Its leadership told the OIG team that the Ambassador was always receptive to its requests for assistance on behalf of individual member companies facing problems in doing business in Morocco. Its leadership also appreciated his support for the Chamber's annual Corporate Good Citizenship Award program.

## DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE COORDINATION

USAID, which began operating in Morocco in 1957, is implementing a five-year strategy focused on economic growth, democracy and governance, and education. Implementation of the strategy, developed in 2003-04, has been coordinated carefully with other sections of the embassy and offices of the Department. The strategy aims to advance reform goals that target economic and social conditions that provide opportunities for extremists. The USAID mission staff interacts extensively with counterparts throughout the embassy and participates in the embassy's goal teams. Unfortunately, the five-year plan has so far been funded at only 60 percent of its planned level of \$100 million.

The DCM and the USAID mission director effectively led this year's Director of U.S. Assistance exercise, a team effort by the embassy that produced USAID's FY 2009 operational plan along with a consolidated table of foreign assistance requests by U.S. agencies. The FY 2009 total request for five categories of assistance – comprising peace and security, governing justly and democratically, investing in people, economic growth, and humanitarian assistance – stands at \$29 million. Formal signing of a Millennium Challenge Compact is expected to lead to the establishment of a small MCC office in Rabat in the fall of 2007. Funding for MCC projects, though, will not actually flow until approximately a year later. The precise extent to which MCC and USAID programs might overlap is unclear at this point. However, USAID informed the OIG team that agriculture was the one area where USAID's current programs could potentially be duplicative with what MCC is contemplating.

USAID routinely briefs the Ambassador on its activities and programs, soliciting his policy guidance. It energetically supports the embassy's public diplomacy programs, such as the recent commemoration of 50 years of U.S partnership with (i.e., economic assistance to) Morocco, in which the Ambassador traveled around the country highlighting achievements to date. At the time of the inspection, USAID also had a request pending for \$2.5 million to fund a program for upgrading youth centers around Morocco, which would expand the embassy's public outreach to alienated and unemployed youth who are often vulnerable to extremist messages.

## PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The medium-sized public affairs section (PAS) is struggling to implement a bold new public diplomacy strategy while continuing to perform a range of more traditional activities, with an annual budget of nearly \$1.6 million. Four Foreign Service

officers – the section’s chief, its cultural affairs officer, the information officer, and a public diplomacy officer assigned to Casablanca – are proficient in Arabic, boosting the PAS’s efforts in Morocco. Many of the 20 LE staff have been with the embassy more than 20 years. The Ambassador and DCM, both of whom are fluent in French and keen on media engagement, provide a further boost. The public affairs officer chairs the embassy’s public diplomacy goals team and meets weekly with the DCM.

Demographics and literacy shape the environment for public diplomacy in Morocco. Nearly 60 per cent of the population is under that age of 30. Illiteracy stands at nearly 50 percent, rising to 70 percent among women. Surveys indicate that only a tiny percent of the population relies primarily on radio and television for news and information while around 90 percent relies on rumor. Surveys conducted by various reputable polling firms suggest that favorable attitudes toward the United States have plunged in the last two years, from a high of perhaps 49 percent at one point, down to single digits, and then up to the mid-teens at the time of this inspection.

Morocco is a flagship for new U.S. public diplomacy efforts to counter Islamic extremism overseas. It was deemed a priority country in public diplomacy efforts aimed at identifying Islamic countries that are both vulnerable and approachable. The strategy, which is pointed to as a model, was fashioned by the country team with extensive input from the Ambassador and DCM. It aims to reach out to broader audiences and younger groups, bolster reform efforts, and create an environment conducive to closer bilateral cooperation. The central message is a theme of partnership between the two countries.

The strategy features prominently in the embassy’s MSP, which specifies that one of the measures of progress will be Moroccan views of the United States, its values, and institutions. To that end, the MSP indicates that the Department’s Bureau of Intelligence and Research is to conduct annual or semiannual public opinion polls and focus groups in Morocco, establishing a baseline for future trends assessments on Moroccan attitudes towards the United States and on Moroccan awareness of U.S. assistance and partnership programs in Morocco. However, the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, which did a number of polls and focus groups up until 2004, has not done any since then. Since then, several other entities have conducted or are planning one-time polling efforts.<sup>4</sup> Clearly, what is needed is a source of longitudinal data with standardized questions to facilitate monitoring of trends and progress over time.

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<sup>4</sup> For example, at the time of the inspection EUCOM, the U.S. military’s regional command, was preparing a lengthy opinion questionnaire for use in the region and seeking input from the embassy. It was not clear, though, whether EUCOM will be conducting recurrent, long-term polling in Morocco.

**Recommendation 1:** Embassy Rabat should request the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs to fund the reinstatement of regular periodic opinion polling in Morocco by the Bureau of Intelligence and Research. (Action: Embassy Rabat)

## Cultural Activities

The cultural affairs unit conducts a vigorous set of exchange activities, including international and voluntary visitor as well as professional programs. The public affairs officer or cultural affairs officer chairs the selection committee. This committee has included representatives from the political and economic section, USFCS, the consulate general in Casablanca, and other sections and agencies, which reported to the OIG team that they had been successful in proposing candidates of their own for these programs.

Just before the arrival of the OIG team, the Fulbright commission celebrated its 25th anniversary in Morocco. Formally known as the Moroccan-American Commission for Educational and Cultural Exchanges, the commission has a very active countrywide alumni program. It also enjoys semiautonomous status and generous support from the government of Morocco. In recent years, the ratio of Moroccan to U.S. financial support has been 1.5 to one, allowing the commission to broaden its range of programs to include graduate business studies and teacher exchanges by high schools. However, the commission voiced several concerns to the OIG team. One was that a recently imposed lifetime restriction of two programs per scholar would curb the overall potential for exchanges, and another was that some U.S. scholars were finding it increasingly difficult to defray personal expenses.

The number of sponsored visitors going to the United States has jumped five-fold from 55 in 1997 to 271 in 2006. In the last two years, the number of programs initiated and funded by MEPI, which sends additional visitors to the United States, has also mushroomed. However, much of the burden for supporting MEPI's Moroccan visitors has fallen heavily upon the PAS. In addition to proposing candidates and serving on selection panels that identify visitors, the PAS staff frequently facilitates visa applications and makes travel arrangements for the visitors. PAS management estimates that the section's staff support for visitors accounts for the equivalent of a full-time LE staff position and a half-time Foreign Service officer. The time and effort required in supporting MEPI exchanges has eroded PAS's ability to plan and implement exchange programs of its own, and it has resulted in a marked drop in PAS reporting to Washington on the cultural and academic environment in Morocco. It also factored in a decision by PAS to turn down a MEPI request to cut grants (see discussion of grants below).

**Recommendation 2:** Embassy Rabat should conduct a structural analysis of the total staff support for Middle East Partnership Initiative programs presently provided by the economic and public affairs sections that could be conducted by eligible family members and request adequate financial resources from the Middle East Partnership Initiative to fund that work. (Action: Embassy Rabat)

## Press Activities

The Ambassador and DCM indicated they were very well served by the PAS's press unit. The information officer oversees digital clipping of television news each evening and sends a selection of clips by e-mail to the front office for review the next morning. By 8:30 a.m., the press unit has reviewed all radio and television coverage and Morocco's 14 major daily newspapers. The Ambassador receives a call if there has been a development likely to merit special attention. By 11 a.m., a traditional media reaction summary goes out to a well-maintained list serve. Throughout each day, the information officer remains in very close, nearly continuous contact with the political section's staff, anticipating and responding to issues of interest in the local media.

PAS is very successful in obtaining placements in the local media, making ample use of the Ambassador's desire to engage and of the section's strong Arabic language skills. For example, during the inspection, the Ambassador, on short notice, made a live appearance on a pan-Arab program broadcast by Al Jazeera. Similarly, a review of the digital files showed that all four of the PAS linguists had been before local television cameras in Arabic several times in the two preceding months.

## Information Resource Center

The Information Resource Center (IRC) subscribes to a number of media feeds, does a daily search, and then provides a review of what has been said about Morocco in the non-Moroccan press to a select list of 350 Moroccans. IRC has also established a network of librarians throughout Morocco who are interested in English-language materials, and it quickly responds to information requests from those librarians. The IRC is actively distributing products from the Bureau of International Information Programs. The demand for "My Arabic Library," a collection of children's books produced in Arabic, with color pictures, by Scholastic Books is quite strong in youth centers and schools.

Another area of responsibility for the IRC is the embassy Internet site. A review by the OIG team indicated that some items on the website were as much as two months old, and several recent activities of the Ambassador, which had received extensive local media coverage, were not posted. PAS management attributed this to staffing gaps and budget shortfalls. A new assistant information officer, who is expected to arrive in summer 2007, could initiate a program to ensure continuous updating of the website.

## Radio Sawa

Radio Sawa is a 24/7 Arabic-language network that broadcasts in Morocco via frequency modulation (FM) transmitters in eight cities that are maintained by engineers from IBB's Morocco transmitting station (see discussion below in section on the Tangier station).<sup>5</sup> A ninth transmitter will soon go into operation in the eastern city of Oujda. Radio Sawa offers cutting edge youth music, with the selection constantly updated via consumer polls, and it offers news on the half hour in Arabic. Several times during the inspection, members of the OIG team heard Radio Sawa blaring from taxis and cafés. Even with the recent entry of several private broadcasting stations, Sawa's listener statistics are highly competitive. Radio Sawa's broadcasts in Morocco afford direct entrée to the disadvantaged youth population of the urban shantytowns and in the countryside.

## Grants Management

PAS has two grants officers, both of whom are designated in writing. The section keeps a careful cuff record of all grants against the respective grant line item. PAS prepares the formal contracting documents for the Ambassador's Empowerment Fund grants, but has refused to do so for MEPI because of the additional staff time that would entail (see discussion of cultural exchanges, with Recommendation 2, above).

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<sup>5</sup> Radio Sawa is a service of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks, Inc. and is publicly funded by the Broadcasting Board of Governors and the U.S. Congress.

## Challenges

PAS faces operational challenges on several fronts. First and foremost are budget constraints. Despite Morocco's designation as a model country, program funding has been flatlined. Fortunately, other agencies have stepped forward to provide some support. USAID is funding a new LE staff position, cosupervised by USAID and the information officer, to handle public events such as USAID's countrywide 50th anniversary of operations in Morocco. Similarly, EUCOM assigned one of its public affairs officers to PAS for six months, with a \$50,000 budget for embassy travel and support of an annual bilateral military exercise in southern Morocco. However, full implementation of the embassy's strategy will hinge on a request for additional funding, still pending at the time of this inspection. The second challenge is workload. The section has experienced a number of staffing gaps in the past two years. In addition, the exchange visitor load – as noted above – has steadily grown. However, relief appears in sight. As part of the Global Repositioning Initiative, PAS will receive two new and much-needed positions, an assistant cultural affairs officer and an assistant information officer, in the summer of 2007.

## Embassy Contacts

The embassy's use of its extensive network of local contacts is not as efficient as it could be. The software currently used by the embassy is apparently a variant of one developed some time ago by Consulate General Frankfurt. Because the software is not user friendly, the staff finds it very difficult to access contacts already in the system. Several sections of the embassy conceded that they rarely attempt to use it. In addition, efforts to update the contact database – for example, to enter new phone numbers – are complicated by the practice of Arabic names frequently being romanized in two or three different ways. As a result, many sections simply maintain their own separate contacts lists, with officers then supplementing those with compilations of their own. Moreover, PAS reported that it had terminated use of the Digital Reference System for maintaining information on its contacts, at the time of the United States Information Agency's consolidation with the Department in 1999, on direct instruction from the embassy's front office. One section chief went so far as to say that the embassy's current contacts database "is nothing more than an annual Fourth of July reception list."

**Recommendation 3:** Embassy Rabat should assess its contacts management requirements and, based on those needs, design and implement a mission-wide, user-friendly contacts management system, and train all staff in the use of the system. (Action: Embassy Rabat)





RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Agency	U.S. Direct-Hire Staff	U.S. Local-Hire Staff	Foreign National Staff	Total Staff	Total Funding FY 2007
State – Program	38	1	20	59	\$ 2,342,341
State – ICASS	10	12	111	133	7,256,010
State – Public Diplomacy	7	1	24	32	1,625,726
State – Diplomatic Security	1	1	23	25	1,359,786
State – Marine Security	6	0	0	6	200,519
State – Representation					67,302
State – OBO	2	0	2	4	1,345,397
State -- MRV	5	0	3	8	245,895
State -- MEPI	0	0	0	0	NA
IBB/Voice of America	5	0	52	57	NA
Foreign Commercial Service	1	0	5	6	270,000
Defense Attaché Office	7	0	3	10	475,000
ODC	6	0	5	11	192,000
Foreign Agricultural Service	1	0	3	4	270,000
Force Protection Detachment	1	0	0	1	275,000
Legal Attaché Office	3	0	0	3	NA
Peace Corps	3	0	2	5	NA
Millennium Challenge Corporation					105,000
USAID	5	2	29	36	NA
<b>Totals</b>	101	17	282	400	\$16,029,976

Source: Embassy Rabat





communication between customers and clients. Other gaps require a conscientious, consistent, and persistent outreach effort. While aware of the issue, it is not clear what embassy management plans to do to improve communications.

## HUMAN RESOURCES

The human resources section is performing its assigned duties with good customer service. The staff was knowledgeable, provided services efficiently, and maintained files in accordance with expectations and regulations. For example, unlike many other posts, this embassy had only one overdue LE staff employee efficiency report. Many of the issues that need correction are being addressed by a new, aggressive human resources officer. Inspection of the section showed that the unit did its work well.

The embassy had incorporated the special immigrant visa (SIV) process into the awards program using the awards committee to judge the merits of applications. The basic laws, regulations, and Department policy go to great lengths to differentiate SIVs from awards. They are neither awards nor fringe benefits. The human resources officer recognized this improper practice and recently disassociated SIVs from awards. He is in the process of drafting SIV policies and creating a separate SIV committee.

### Locally Employed Staff

The two basic groups within the LE population are Americans hired locally and other employees, generally Moroccan citizens. The process for hiring Americans is well managed and gets good satisfaction ratings from employees. (b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)

The group has a disproportionate number of employees reaching mandatory retirement age (60 under Moroccan law) and an extraordinary number work under the Civil Service Retirement Plan (participation by new entrants was terminated in 1979).

The mission has had reductions in force of about 50 percent in USAID in 2003, and the embassy lost 15 positions in 2000 and three more in 2006. The staff has not had a pay raise in two years. They also maintain that medical plan benefits have been reduced despite repeated explanations by management that this was not the case. Adding to the equation was a criminal prosecution of an employee from Consulate General Casablanca, and forced resignations of most of the embassy procurement staff for malfeasance. What may be random events to Americans appear to the LE



## GENERAL SERVICES

Curtailments, reassignments, and resignations highlight GSO operations over the last two years, negatively affecting leadership and leading to communications breakdowns, deteriorating customer service, and serious lapses in service delivery. Two previous American supervisors performed poorly. Without firm leadership at the helm, many inexperienced LE staff and American first-time supervisors performed without adequate guidance or direction. The flow of communication within and between some sections slowed or stopped altogether, so that the coordination so essential for efficient service delivery ceased. Without stable, firm American supervision, customer service faltered. Employees repeatedly complained in OIG interviews and personal questionnaires about poor service delivery and bad customer service despite team building exercises and presentations on customer service by managers.

### Procurement and Contracting Section

The procurement and contract section experienced a major upheaval about 18 months ago when all but one of the section's LE staff were forced to resign for malfeasance. The current LE staff is relatively new and is supervised by an officer with previous Foreign Service experience now serving as an acting GSO for the first time. The Department provided trainers and funding for a two-week procurement course to train the new LE staff at post. They systematically scrubbed the procurement files to close out completed actions and deobligated long-outstanding purchase orders going back to FY 2002. Procurement folders were properly set up and notated, and included the necessary supporting documentation. A review of a random sample of purchase orders found they included competitive quotations for purchases above the micro-purchase threshold, required competition, price reasonableness, and cost information. The embassy has set up 15 blanket purchase agreements (BPAs), which have been competed and bulk funded. These are used regularly, particularly by the facilities maintenance section. BPAs are reviewed periodically and modified when sources of supply change significantly. In close consultation with the Department, contracts have, likewise, been competed and administered in accordance with regulations and contract files are appropriately maintained.

The current staff has performed admirably under difficult conditions with limited training, but if this promising start is to be sustained, additional training will be required. The acting GSO described support from her supervisors as good but would have preferred some structured guidance.

## Property and Supply

Embassy Rabat's property management practices are sound. Physical inventory and reconciliation certifications were on file for the last three fiscal years. Annual inventories of U.S. government-owned property are up to date and submitted to the Department on time. Except for a few outstanding ones (even after repeated reminders), residential inventories are current and complete. Employees were appropriately assessed for lost or damaged items, and reimbursements were collected prior to departure from post.

The leased warehouse is well managed, clean, and well organized. New and used household furniture and appliances are neatly arranged and shelved. The receiving area is segregated from the warehouse, and access is controlled. Items are appropriately segregated, and tags are color coded for easy identification between International Cooperative Administrative Support Services (ICASS) and program. Other agency property is segregated, and access is controlled. Receiving reports were completed accurately and discrepancies noted. The supply room located in the chancery basement is also well organized and neatly arranged. The accountable property officer conducts periodic unannounced spot counts of expendable and nonexpendable property and verifies property records.

## Shipping and Customs

Employees rated the efficiency of customs and shipping relatively low. LE staff in the section lack experience in shipping and customs, and have received very little or no formal training. Delays are frequent, particularly for shipments from or through the Department's European logistics center, leading to employee frustration and complaints. Household effects are usually cleared with little delay, and often the section can obtain approval in advance of the employee's arrival. Unaccompanied air freight is generally cleared and delivered shortly after arrival from the airport. Vehicle registration is often time-consuming and subject to bureaucratic delay.

## Travel

The travel section provides administrative support for visits, travel services, and hotel reservations. The section also supports high-level visitors. A unit of Carlson Wagonlit is located in the chancery and provides easy access for employees to contract travel services. The section is managed by an LE staff member who is knowl-



edgeable of travel regulations and maintains good records. All business class travel, when authorized, is supported by documentation that is on file. No first class travel was authorized or performed.

## Motor Pool

Employees ranked the responsiveness of the motor pool unit very highly on their WQLQs. The motor pool is a very service-oriented operation and is attentive to preventative maintenance, driver training, and accurate vehicle record keeping. The embassy's motor vehicle policy prescribes policies for business and other authorized use.

Drivers are very attentive to the requirement that passengers wear seat belts at all times and take very good care of their vehicles. Trip reports are completed regularly, and drivers note any needed servicing or repair. The motor pool supervisor schedules driver overtime in advance and in a transparent manner so that drivers can plan their work schedules. No vehicles have been disposed of in the last two years because of the very high duty rates imposed by the Moroccan government and the poor condition of the vehicles. Given the poor market, the embassy plans to donate vehicles scheduled for disposal and avoid the high duties altogether. Many of the vehicles have been hauled to the Orange Grove site (see Facilities below) awaiting disposal. Several other old vehicles, some transferred from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the rest owned by the Department of Defense, also litter the property. With empty shipping containers stored there as well, the property looks unsightly.

Vehicle repair facilities are well maintained and clean, and mechanics appear to be supplied adequately with appropriate tools and equipment. The facility handles routine maintenance and major repairs but body work is contracted out.

## Housing

The end result is that the embassy provides excellent housing, but the process is flawed. It lacks coordination and transparency and unnecessarily wastes money and effort as tenants sit in temporary quarters. Last summer an unusually high number of transfers overwhelmed poorly organized sections, especially GSO and facilities maintenance. The results were fraught with problems and complaints, and appeared to carry over even to those transferring in the quiet winter period. The three primary causes were ineffective use of the housing board, poor, or nonexistent, coordination among the service providers, and a former housing officer who violated almost every principle of running a good housing program.

The housing board has not been effectively used and has had to drive the program instead of being a consultative body. The board should make decisions based on information provided as a package by the housing officer. Instead, the board chairman has had to ask simple questions like when the board will receive housing proposals for this summer's turnover, who is coming, when, and family size. The previous housing officer made arbitrary housing decisions, made changes that confused even his own staff, allowed agencies to make their own exchanges of property, and generally failed to ensure that communications existed within his own section. As a result, some employees were inappropriately housed, many waited in temporary quarters but could have moved into housing on arrival, and maintenance work was delayed or ignored.

Blame has been appropriately laid at the door of the housing officer, but the OIG team found that the chain that makes a good housing program work did not exist. A well-run program has a chain involving the human resources office, community liaison office coordinator, and the housing board. Decisions are passed back to the relevant offices and forwarded to the facilities maintenance section to prepare the unit for occupancy and the property section if furniture and appliances need to be moved. Each section should understand its role, and communication flows should be computerized. Embassy Rabat does not have a standard operating procedure that outlines process and responsibilities. The OIG team made an informal recommendation, and the embassy is now developing procedures.

## Facilities Maintenance

Customer satisfaction with the quality of facilities maintenance services in three broad categories of the WQLQ was above the post's average but ranked lower than the norms at posts previously inspected. The OIG team was surprised by the mild scoring because the unit suffered from many of the issues identified in other parts of this report, reportedly had weak leadership, and by the many blistering comments respondents made to the OIG team about service to residential units. Complicating the communications problem was the fact that most of the maintenance LE staff does not speak English, and most customers do not speak Arabic. The OIG team noted there was no routine maintenance schedule, and fire alarms were not routinely checked or tested. However, this is one section where there are visible signs of improvement and good morale.

A new facilities manager has arrived and set high standards. He is working to install standard operating procedures, computerize operations, and take out the mystery of what his section is doing. He is also addressing the many recommendations (most involving occupational health and safety) and brought in teams of experts

from the Department. He believes that the staff is adequately trained and equipped and seems unaffected by the large number of long-serving employees with a lax work ethic. He is fully aware of the past and the problems. Nonetheless, the unit has been slow to adopt new software to track work orders. Working with the information management staff, the facilities manager is taking corrective action.

## Facilities

The embassy operates from a chancery that is functional but obsolete. There are no plans to replace it with a new one in the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO's) current list of 80 properties scheduled for replacement. The PAS was recently moved into the chancery for security reasons, and the lease of its former offices terminated. The embassy makes effective use of several government-owned residential units and one property used for the employee association. USAID offices are located in a leased property. Security issues are described in the security annex to this report.

The U.S. government owns two additional properties – the Orange Grove site and Osborne House. The Orange Grove is an 8.4-acre site purchased as a new chancery site at a concessionary price from the Moroccan government. The area is now becoming a high-end residential area with many countries building large embassy compounds. Clearly, the land is increasing in value, and selling it might offend the palace. Eventually however, the current chancery will have to be replaced. There is no compelling reason to dispose of this property but sufficient reason to consider it to address current security vulnerabilities.

The previous OIG inspection report of Rabat<sup>6</sup> recommended that the embassy dispose of Osborne House, an underutilized house next door to the Ambassador's residence. The embassy and OBO concurred, but there is no further documentation on file. The house was not sold, and now the embassy, per the MSP, wants to refurbish the house and use it as either housing for visitors on temporary duty or design it as residential housing for two officers. OBO has not encouraged retaining units to support temporary visitors, because refurbishing and maintenance is too costly and does not save, significantly, over that saved in hotel expenses. However, two housing units of the type proposed would save between \$40,000-\$50,000 in rental costs annually. Therefore if renovation is economically practical, the embassy's proposal would over time save substantial amounts of money.

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<sup>6</sup> Inspection of Embassy Rabat, Morocco, Consulate General Casablanca, and the BBG Morocco Transmitting Station, ISP/I-00-05

**Recommendation 4:** Embassy Rabat should prepare cost estimates and submit them to the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, which should approve funding to refurbish Osborne House as a residence suitable for two single employees or couples without children. (Action: Embassy Rabat, in coordination with OBO)

## International Cooperative Administrative Support Services

The Department is the sole service provider. Embassy Rabat's ICASS council is active and meets at least every month. A new chairman of the ICASS council has not taken any ICASS training. Embassy Rabat has ICASS standards for all service providers, but they are not being used as a management tool except in the financial management section. Although ICASS service standards are required to be reviewed annually, some standards show 2005 as the last time they were reviewed. Informal recommendations address these issues.

## Consolidation of Administrative Services

USAID and the Department maintain separate administrative functions including supplies, procurement, financial services, motor pool, and information systems but do share warehouse space, albeit under separate management. USAID is not colocated in the chancery. The Department's Joint Management Council placed Embassy Rabat in Tier 3 for consolidation of USAID and Department administrative functions. Posts on this tier are those with plans to colocate Department and USAID in FY 2011 or later. Although significant economies of scale are unlikely to be achieved under the current situation, the ICASS council can still explore ways to reduce duplication of administrative services between these two agencies.

## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The financial management office provides satisfactory financial services to the embassy, Consulate General Casablanca, and 20 ICASS subscribers. The section reviews accounts regularly and follows required procedures. A cash count was performed during the inspection, and all accounts balanced. Two accountant positions and the Class B cashier position were vacant. During the course of the inspection, the financial management officer was interviewing potential candidates to fill these positions.

The dissatisfaction expressed in the WQLQs could be a result of the continuing interpersonal problems among the financial management office staff that have caused a decrease in customer service and, to a lesser degree, productivity. Embassy management addressed the section's dynamics proactively and brought in an instructor from the Foreign Service Institute to conduct a workshop on team building. Although the OIG team commends the embassy's efforts, more team building and customer service training is needed to ensure that quality financial services are provided to all ICASS subscribers.

## Official Telephones

The information management office, and the financial management office are working together to strengthen the billing charges with the local telecom company, Maroc Telecom. They have made good progress in determining the legitimacy of the telephone accounts and payments, but the mission is still allowing staff to make personal local and long distance calls from official office and cellular telephones without using a personal calling card. According to 5 FAM 523 and Department Notice 2004 04 043, occasional personal calls are authorized provided a personal calling card is used and the call does not interfere with work. The regulations also state that employees must not make telephone calls that result in additional charges even with the intent for later reimbursement to the U.S. government.

Each month, the financial management office sends the bills to each office to determine the number of personal local and long distance calls to be billed to individual users. This vouchering process is time-consuming and an inefficient use of financial management staff time.

**Recommendation 5:** Embassy Rabat should stop collecting charges for personal calls on official telephones and issue the Department's policy regarding this issue. (Action: Embassy Rabat)

## INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Embassy Rabat's information management (IM) section is well run and received good scores in the OIG management questionnaire. The information management officer (IMO) has done a good job providing oversight and direction while meeting the day-to-day information management needs of the embassy. The embassy effec-

tively maintains the classified and unclassified local area networks, telephone, radio, and pouch services. Additionally, the IMO is to be commended for his success in advocating for funds to send several of his IM staff to school to upgrade their knowledge and skills in line with the Department's technology enhancements. One deficiency was out-of-date and missing system documentation.

While the IMO has done a generally good job managing the IM needs of Embassy Rabat, the IMO has provided minimal support or structured supervision to Consulate General Casablanca. Given the increasing workload at the consulate and the Department's staffing allocation of just one IM person there, the sole IM person has been overwhelmed. The embassy's IM staff allocation of five should be sufficient to share the IM workload at the consulate. However, the IMO has not fully addressed his overall responsibilities as the mission IMO. Personality conflicts between the previous IMO and the information program officer complicated matters. Also, the information program officer has not always planned ahead and only asked for assistance at the last minute. The relationship is improving.

## Information Technology Contingency Plan

Per 12 FAM 622.3-2, "the data center manager and the system manager must update each contingency plan annually or when major modifications to the automated information systems occur." Embassy Rabat's contingency plan for its Sensitive But Unclassified system was created in May 2004 and has not been updated since. It appears that the IM staff lacked understanding of 12 FAM 622 requirements and consequently did not update the plan. Furthermore, per 12 FAM 622.3-2, the data center manager and the system manager should test each contingency plan annually or when major modifications are made. Without an updated contingency plan, the embassy may not be able to recover and resume emergency operations following a catastrophic loss of data.

**Recommendation 6:** Embassy Rabat should update the Sensitive But Unclassified contingency plan and put in place procedures to test the plan annually or when major modifications are made. (Action: Embassy Rabat)

## Telecommunication Services

The IMO is working to straighten out the billing charges with the local telecommunications company, Maroc Telecom. This problem surfaced two years ago following allegations of fraud against the embassy's procurement staff (since forced to resign for malfeasance). Due to a lack of management oversight, some GSO employees used government cell phones, Internet asymmetric digital subscriber line, and post residual accounts to defraud the government. They set up bogus accounts, charged bills to individuals no longer at post, and ignored or did not pay bills when due. When the fraud was discovered in late 2005, the current IMO volunteered to investigate and straighten out billing. The IMO is now providing oversight and staffing to assist the financial management staff to reconcile billings.

## Training

It is not easy to quantify, but some LE staff lack basic computer skills to fulfill their job requirements, and many are older and comfortable with manual methods to accomplish their work. The OIG team found that the problem is a combination of weak English language skills, lack of basic computer skills (i.e., typing) and knowledge of applications (i.e., WEBPASS), and resistance to automation.

**Recommendation 7:** Embassy Rabat should develop and implement an information management training program. (Action: Embassy Rabat)

## EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Department's EEO materials and guidance are well publicized on bulletin boards and on the embassy's website. Embassy Rabat does not have any EEO cases to report. The EEO counselor from Consulate General Casablanca has been acting as the EEO counselor for the embassy as well. An EEO counselor was recently named but has not taken the EEO training. OIG made an informal recommendation that the EEO counselor for Embassy Rabat take the EEO training prior to counseling any EEO cases. Once the EEO counselor has taken the EEO training, his contact information can be publicized. The OIG team noted that the embassy

does not have a Federal Women's Program or a Federal Women's Program manager named, however the position is being advertised. OIG made an informal recommendation regarding this issue.

## AVIAN INFLUENZA PREPAREDNESS

The mission's interagency avian influenza task force is chaired by the economic counselor. With the health unit in the lead, and excellent coordination, the mission developed a Department-mandated contingency plan with tripwires. The health unit ordered supplies (masks, gowns, gloves, etc.) and a substantial stock of Tamiflu to cover 60 percent of the embassy's American and Foreign Service national population.

Because the Moroccan poultry industry generates \$1.4 billion annually and employs 230,000 people, the government of Morocco is keenly aware of the impact of a potential avian influenza outbreak. In October 2005, the Moroccan government unveiled its National Pandemic Influenza Preparedness and Response Plan, which largely follows World Health Organization guidance for responding to an influenza pandemic. The government of Morocco has identified risk areas and reportedly performs surveillance of these sites. A lack of resources could prove to be a weakness. While Morocco has good testing capabilities, there is a shortage of protective gear for health workers, and there are no supplies of antiviral medications. Moroccan government agricultural officials have asked for U.S. government technical assistance for training in laboratory diagnosis of avian influenza, personal protection equipment, and diagnostic materials. The Moroccan government has engaged in a vigorous public information campaign to reassure the public that it has the problem in hand. Information about risks of avian influenza has been openly discussed and disseminated in the press, including the state-run media.







brary/media centers, a cafeteria, a swimming pool, a gymnasium, and field spaces for basketball, volleyball, softball, and soccer. There are specialized facilities for computer science, art, and music.

Most parents expressed satisfaction with school quality and facilities, but some questioned whether the school was adequate. At post invitation, a consultant from the Department's Office of Overseas Schools visited in 2005 to review the school's academic program and to evaluate whether the school was adequate. Her assessment and subsequent report reaffirmed that the school was adequate. The school has just been reaccredited by the Middle States Association, valid for the next seven years. Parents also expressed concern about drug use. School administrators told the OIG team that the drug problem at the school is no worse than in other international schools. A drug-tolerant Moroccan culture and the absence of any local legal sanctions exacerbated the problem. The school has an active drug education program, and drug information is incorporated into health class offerings. The school also regularly conducts U.S.-funded chemical dependency education workshops. The school has received an \$800,000 five-year MEPI grant to enroll 10 Moroccan students. As of the inspection, five students who meet the grant's strict admission criteria have been admitted.

## COMMUNITY LIAISON OFFICE

The community liaison office (CLO) is staffed by two first-time CLO coordinators, one recently hired and the other in the job since May 2006. Responses to OIG's administrative services satisfaction questionnaires revealed a relatively high level of satisfaction with CLO-sponsored recreation activities. The CLO organizes a variety of programs that are well supported by the mission community. In response to criticism by some singles that families receive a disproportionate level of services, the CLO has tried to shift programming. As a start, the CLO plans to survey singles to better assess their needs and program accordingly. Some newcomers criticized the most recent orientation program as hastily put together and of marginal utility because the management counselor spoke on behalf of many other sections who were not represented, ostensibly to reduce the number of speakers and to save time. Sponsorship programs are working well, but could be strengthened with stronger front office involvement and support. Interpersonal relations between Moroccan and American employees have been described as uneasy, stemming, in large part, from cultural misunderstandings or ignorance. While the CLO did not include pre-

sentations on intercultural awareness in newcomer orientation programs, or organize workshops to promote intercultural awareness and sensitivity in the workplace and beyond, sessions explaining Ramadan to Americans were held in the past.

## EMBASSY COOPERATIVE ASSOCIATION

The nonprofit Embassy Cooperative Association provides a range of services to U.S. government employees and their family members. The association runs a commissary, gift shop, snack bar, community center with playground, auto rental, gas pump, and a video club. In 2006, the association had a profit of \$13,250. About 65 percent of its income comes from the commissary, memberships for access to the American club, and gas pump sales.

The commissary has been managed by a locally employed American since 1984. The commissary is colocated with the American club. The new commissary, completed in 2006, was funded by both OBO and the Department's Office of Commissary and Recreation Affairs. The OIG team noted two shortcomings with this building. First, there is not enough storage area for merchandise. The association is using the Osborne House as the off-compound storage facility. Also, the commissary receiving area is not adequate. The loading dock can only accommodate 20-foot containers, but most of the containers that the commissary uses are 40-foot. Interviews and documentation show that Embassy Rabat administrators at the time approved the designed plans.



## MANAGEMENT CONTROLS

Overall, administrative management controls in the embassy and Consulate General Casablanca are conducted in accordance with Department regulations. The embassy completed a Risk Assessment Questionnaire for Embassies in May 2007, and the scores, by function, were all above 75 percent. The Chief of Mission signed the Annual Management Controls Certification on July 21, 2006, identifying two reportable conditions. The first material weakness was the malfeasance in contracting, procurement, and nonexpendable property receiving operations in Embassy Rabat. The visa fraud committed by an LE staff consular employee in March 2006 was the second reportable condition. The embassy implemented satisfactory corrective actions for both weaknesses. Minor issues were corrected during the course of the inspection.

### Cashiering

Embassy Rabat's financial management office has one temporary Class B cashier, an alternate Class B cashier, and five designated subcashiers. The OIG team found only one month of unannounced cash reconciliations for the embassy subcashiers. According to 4 FAH-3 H-397.2-3, supervisors must conduct an unannounced verification of subcashier funds at least monthly if the advance is \$1,000 or more and quarterly if it is less than \$1,000. If the cashier is unable to obtain the required reconciliations, the cashier's supervisor should assist, and if necessary, terminate the subcashier's designation if verifications cannot be conducted and submitted in a timely manner.

With the exception of the consular section, at Consulate General Casablanca the Class B cashier rather than the subcashiers' supervisors has been performing the unannounced cash reconciliation monthly. It is the subcashiers' American supervisors' responsibility to conduct and submit all unannounced cash verifications, not the consular Class B cashier's.

**Recommendation 8:** Embassy Rabat should perform monthly or quarterly unannounced cash reconciliations for all subcashiers and submit copies of the verification to the U.S. Disbursing Officer. (Action: Embassy Rabat)

There are five subcashiers at Consulate General Casablanca, including three in the consular section. In large consular operations, the primary consular cashier normally has at least two backup subcashiers. The consulate general's consular operations do not. Also, most unannounced cash verifications, including those of the Class B cashier, are performed at the end of the month. Informal recommendations were made addressing these issues.

## Consular Internal Controls

No vulnerabilities were found in the storage and management of controlled documents or classified material. The consular section chief is the accountable consular officer, and controlled items including passports and visa foils are kept in his office safe. Files containing classified documents are also secured there, and access is controlled.

## Embassy Cooperative Association: Alcohol and Tobacco Sales

The Embassy Cooperative Association does not have limits on alcohol and tobacco sales. Moreover, there is no monitoring system in place for these duty-free items. Rations were used some time ago, but the practice was stopped. The OIG team found no evidence that sales of alcohol or tobacco are being monitored and reported to embassy management periodically. There were no indicators that duty-free alcohol and tobacco are being resold on the open market. However, it is a good management practice to prevent employees from abusing their diplomatic privileges.

**Recommendation 9:** Embassy Rabat should establish limits and monitor sales of duty-free alcohol and tobacco by the Embassy Cooperative Association.  
(Action: Embassy Rabat)

## CONSULATE GENERAL CASABLANCA

### OVERVIEW

Consulate general Casablanca is medium-sized with 17 American employees and 42 LE staff. The consulate general is responsible for consular operations country-wide, has a significant public affairs program with a freestanding library/public affairs center, a political-labor officer, an economic officer, and two diplomatic security officers. The USFCS, headquartered in Casablanca, has an officer with regional responsibility for Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria (see section on business support for additional discussion), and there are management and information technology sections to support these offices.

With a population of three million, Casablanca is Morocco's business and financial hub, as well as the country's principal international port. The city has long been a magnet for underemployed rural Moroccans. As a result, it periodically experiences social unrest and serious crime. Both the embassy and the consulate general have a keen interest in promoting American business interests in Casablanca. The proximity to Rabat could potentially have created problems of overlapping jurisdiction, but the Ambassador and consul general work well together to ensure that their public speaking and advocacy efforts complement rather than conflict with one another. Casablanca's political and economic reporting is excellent, well coordinated with that of the embassy (see section on political affairs for further details), and was expanding prior to the consulate general's temporary closure for security reasons.

Casablanca has been under particular stress as a result of two suicide bomb explosions in April, one just across the street from the consulate general, and the consequent closure of the post and examination of additional security measures to protect lives and property at American facilities. The bombing contributed to low morale among American and LE staff. Many were stressed out by the temporary closure and the daily travel to the embassy in Rabat to work. The uncertainty surrounding the reopening, daily street harassment of women, and the general crime situation made matters worse. But employee morale improved markedly when the





## Real Property and Facilities

The consulate general offices are relatively modern and well maintained. The entire U.S. government-owned compound has gone through a major rehabilitation construction project, improving the space mostly in the consular section and the consular waiting area. A compound security upgrade has been planned for Casablanca in FY 2008. In addition, Consulate General Casablanca has been added to OBO's top 80 list for a new building in FY 2014.

The public affairs office and a cultural library are located in Dar America. This large two-story leased villa is located in a residential area close to the consulate general. Due to lack of setback, the 2000 OIG inspection report recommended termination of the lease for Dar America and to move the PAS into the consulate general building. Although these recommendations were closed, the embassy did not comply with them. The recommendations have since been overtaken by circumstances. The consulate general building does not have any space to accommodate the PAS or its activities. The security of Dar America is discussed in the classified annex of this report.

The consulate general residence is located in one of the most picturesque and oldest areas of Casablanca. Constructed in 1935, this historic building was used as the meeting place between President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Winston Churchill during World War II. Funds to maintain the beautification of this representational property have been provided as required, but more maintenance work is needed including an electrical upgrade and connection to the city sewage system. These maintenance items have been submitted to OBO, and funding is scheduled for FY 2008.

## Staffing

At the present time, the consulate general management staff has the right number of American employees and LE staff. In the FY 2009 MSP, the embassy requests an additional information management position for the consulate general in Casablanca. The OIG team believes that one information management position, at present, is sufficient to support information management operations. Although a one-person operation could be difficult at times, the team believes that improved coordination support with Embassy Rabat may be a better solution. This particular issue is addressed in the information management section of this report.

Two NSDD-38 requests from DHS have been approved for Consulate General Casablanca. Adding two American employees without additional LE staff in

the management section may adversely affect the responsiveness and the quality of management services. Neither the embassy nor the consulate general has analyzed the administrative workload or determined the resource cost of additional staff. The OIG team informally recommended that Embassy Rabat analyze the administrative workload of affected sections and determine resource costs for adding personnel at Consulate General Casablanca.

## Equal Employment Opportunity

Consulate General Casablanca has no EEO cases to report. The EEO counselor is known among Americans and LE staff. Although the current EEO counselor is attentive to EEO matters, she has not taken the annual mandatory refresher EEO training. The EEO counselor is leaving post, and no one has been identified to be the next EEO counselor. In addition, no active Federal Women's Program or Federal Women's Program Manager has been named. Informal recommendations were made on these issues.

## General Services

Consulate general personnel are generally satisfied with services from GSO and the section does well in most areas. The shipping and customs section worked very well as might be expected in a major port city. A commercial contractor provides travel services. The motor pool provides efficient services. The consulate general does not have a warehouse; therefore, the inventory and reconciliation activities are performed by Embassy Rabat personnel. Although the management officer has a contracting warrant, major contracts for services to the consulate general are awarded and processed by the procurement section in the embassy. All records for these functions are kept in Embassy Rabat. Consulate General Casablanca would benefit by having copies of its inventory and reconciliation records and contracts.

For the most part, procurement activities at the consulate general are limited to purchase orders under \$2,500 and BPAs. Some of the purchase orders reviewed did not show important transactional information, such as determination of price reasonableness and the systematic presentation of cost. In addition, some of the official procurement folders (DS-1918) were not reviewed and signed by the contracting officer. These minor procedural deficiencies are addressed through informal recommendations.

The consulate general is managing 12 BPAs. For most agreements, the requirement office (the office requesting the BPA for supplies or services) had named a BPA manager (the person in the office who manages and tracks expenditures). The consulate general has an electrician and a plumber under BPAs. Although the consulate general received guidance from the Bureau of Administration's Office of the Procurement Executive on how to obtain the services from these two individuals through the use of BPAs, how the BPAs are executed is questionable. The electrician and the plumber report to the consulate general building most mornings to obtain their work orders instead of waiting for requests from the consulate general. They do not use U.S. government-owned tools or materials, or work solely for the consulate general. However, reporting in the mornings to obtain work orders from the consulate general may give the impression that there is an employer/employee relationship. The OIG team made an informal recommendation addressing this issue.

## Housing, and Fire and Safety issues

Most employees are satisfied with their housing, although there are a few officers who occupy older housing with chronic maintenance problems that require major repairs from landlords. The housing board at the consulate general is aware of this issue and has been upgrading the housing pool as officers depart post. Although the OIG team concurs with this approach, lease cost limits need to be observed.

The consulate general's safety, health, and environmental management (SHEM) program is active, but needs to distribute safety directives and enforce them. The SHEM committee met in 2007 and implemented most of the recommendations from the SHEM and fire reports conducted in 2006.

## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The consulate general has a Class B cashier, and personnel are generally satisfied with the cashiering services. The financial management officer and the consulate general management officer developed and implemented standard operating procedures for processing travel orders, advances, and purchase orders. These procedures have helped to expedite the vouchering process. However, the OIG team found that there were a high number of subcashiers, and cash count verifications have not been performed properly. These issues are addressed in the Management Controls section of this report.



## CONSULAR AFFAIRS

During the period of this inspection, Consulate General Casablanca was closed to the general public due to a suicide bombing attempt. The consular section, staffed by the section head and several LE staff, provided only emergency American citizens services (ACS) and very limited visa processing. The remainder of the section's employees traveled to work in other sections at Embassy Rabat or were in training. However, when the consulate general reopened for business in early June, the OIG team returned to complete the inspection and found the consular section working hard to address the backlog in consular, and particularly, visa services.

The section is headed by an experienced, knowledgeable, and involved FS-01 officer and staffed by one FS-03 and three ELOs. The section's working and waiting areas are adequate for the current consular workload, given the space limitations of the current consulate general facility. A new facility is planned for FY 2014, but the initial planning has not yet begun.

### Consular Space

The consular section is located on the ground floor of the consulate general in Casablanca. Embassy Rabat does not provide routine consular services. The consular section's workspace and waiting rooms have been completely renovated since the last inspection in 2000. There are now five additional visa interview windows, a secure cashier's booth, a private handicap accessible interview booth and a slightly larger visa waiting room. While the visa work area is slightly smaller, its new configuration and the modular furniture make it much more functional. Both officers and LE staff commented that the renovated work area was a great improvement. The renovation also created a separate ACS waiting room with a private interview booth and adjoining work area.

### Consular Staffing

All five of the section's officer positions are filled. The three ELO positions are staffed by first- or second-tour officers. The section chief is an FS-02, and the FS-03 deputy position is filled by a recently promoted FS-03 officer. One ELO manages the immigrant visa/diversity visa unit, the second the nonimmigrant visa unit, and the third heads both the ACS and the fraud prevention units (FPU). The FS-03 deputy section chief adjudicates visas with the ELOs. There are 11 consular LE staff

employees, three of whom are in supervisory positions. The section is scheduled to receive a DHS visa security unit in a few months staffed by two DHS Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers.

## Public Access Controls

The recent suicide bombing prompted a complete review of public access controls. One lane of the street in front of the consulate general has been blocked off with large dirt-filled dumpsters, and all visitors must undergo security screenings across the street. The OIG team observed passport and visa applicants undergoing security checks across the street from the consulate general before being escorted over by a police officer to the secure area in front of the consulate general. Once applicants are on the sidewalk in front of the building, local guards direct them to either enter the controlled consular access or to the nonimmigrant visa street-side document screening window. Any applicant who has to leave the secure area in front of the consulate general to obtain a missing item must undergo the full screening process before returning.

## Consular Training and Outreach

The section has developed a comprehensive written training program for newly arrived consular section officers. Before an officer arrives, another consular officer is designated as a trainer/briefer, other Foreign Service officers and LE staff are informed, and access to post and consular systems is requested. A newly arrived officer is introduced to all section employees, briefed on basic operations and services, and observes interviews. In the next few days, the officer begins visa interviews, is briefed on management controls, given the section's written standard operating procedures, consular package, F-77 report, and other relevant consular reporting. Several LE staff employees are cross-trained to help out in other consular units when they are short staffed or their workload increases.

Consular section officers have participated in outreach activities to American residents in Morocco, speaking on the services provided by the ACS unit. The consular section participates in the mission's avian influenza working group and has conducted town hall meetings for U.S. citizens in seven cities throughout Morocco. Consular officers have also met with Moroccan groups to give presentations on the different U.S. visa programs, the visa application process, and on life in the United States. Officers also participated in outreach assistance to a boys home in a slum area.

## American Citizens Services

Consular management gives considerable attention to the protection of American citizens and continually updates its warden system. The demand for passports and reports of birth abroad continues to grow. Applicants for passports, reports of birth, and federal benefits may come to the ACS unit without an appointment. ACS officers and LE staff routinely work with Moroccan authorities to ensure prompt notification of the arrest of U.S. citizens and to facilitate timely access to Americans in jail. The consulate general in coordination with Embassy Rabat, has developed an emergency action plan. The Consular Handbook provides procedures for managing in an emergency and sets forth several emergency scenarios. Each emergency scenario outlines the consular duties and response to the needs of private U.S. citizens. The ACS unit works closely with the Bureau of Consular Affairs, Office of Children's Issues, on cases involving parental child abduction. In one case, the ACS unit was able to facilitate the opening of communication between the child and the left-behind parent in the United States. Morocco is not a party to The Hague Convention, but the government has expressed an interest in a memorandum of understanding on consular access in children's issues cases; however its coordination on creating and adopting the memorandum has lagged. While Morocco is covered by the Social Security Administration office in Rome, the ACS unit provides services such as taking applications for benefits and requests for assistance.

**Recommendation 10:** Embassy Rabat should cross-train another locally employed staff employee to do American citizens services work and assist the unit when required in Consulate General Casablanca. (Action: Embassy Rabat)

## Visa Operations

The visa unit has recently undergone a complete renovation. It no longer shares space with the ACS unit, and the number of interviewing windows has increased. The larger waiting area and additional windows allow for the simultaneous interviews of nonimmigrant and immigrant visa applicants. This has resulted in greater efficiency in processing and increased the number of daily visa interview appointments.





fake documents, the reliability of official documents, and local issues that affect fraud in Morocco. The FPU has written procedures for adjudicating visa officers to follow when referring cases for investigation. The FPU has conducted a nonimmigrant visa validation study in accordance with Bureau of Consular Affairs Fraud Prevention Program guidelines. The fraud prevention manager and LE staff investigator have participated in regional conferences and keep up with developments in fraud prevention. The FPU collects samples of fraudulent documents shared with adjudicating officers in training and as reference materials. After the arrest of the senior immigrant visa LE staff employee for visa fraud, the FPU worked closely with the immigrant visa/diversity visa unit officer to heighten scrutiny in the rescheduling of diversity visa appointments.

The FPU has contacts with Moroccan immigration, customs, and police officials, Royal Air Maroc, and other international airlines. These and other contacts have been useful in fraud investigations and identifying potential training programs. The fraud prevention manager shares information on local fraud trends with consular counterparts from other foreign missions. The manager also has ongoing contact with Bureau of Consular Affairs, Office of Fraud Prevention Programs, and other bureau offices on fraud issues, trends, and cases.

## Internal Controls

The OIG team found no vulnerabilities in the storage and management of controlled documents or classified material. The consular section chief is the accountable consular officer, and controlled items including passports and visa foils are kept in his office safe. Consular classified files are secured in the controlled access area.

## Department of Homeland Security Visa Security Unit

The consular section is scheduled to receive a DHS visa security unit within the next few months. The consular section chief has had an exchange of communications on the focus and scope of the unit's work with the DHS Citizenship and Immigration Services officer coming to set up the visa security unit. Once the DHS officer arrives, the section chief should continue to stress the need for the visa security unit's coordination on case handling and information sharing with the FPU, and other mission sections and agencies.



## MOROCCO TRANSMITTING STATION, TANGIERS

### OVERVIEW

IBB maintains a large shortwave radio transmitting station near the northern Moroccan city of Tangiers. The station unofficially is referred to by some as IBB's "flagship." The 1,147-acre site completed in 1993 at a cost in excess of \$200 million uses 10 500-kilowatt transmitters to broadcast Voice of America, Radio Liberty and Radio Free Europe to Eastern Europe, parts of the former Soviet Union, the Middle East, and Central and West Africa.

It has an American staff of four (plus one vacancy) and Moroccan staff of 52 (with 11 vacancies) who not only operate the site, but also install equipment and provide technical assistance to other FM radio transmission sites throughout Africa. The American staff of the station supervises stations in Djibouti and Cyprus, and one of them is invariably absent from Morocco traveling throughout the region. The technical expertise of the staff is very high, and employees are frequently called upon to support other stations. One LE staff person is working in Djibouti to establish that broadcast network. Within Morocco, their only function is to provide limited technical support to FM stations broadcasting Radio Sawa.

Based on the diminishing importance of shortwave, more program focus on the Middle East and the increased use of FM, IBB has begun to invest more in FM stations and less on shortwave. IBB maintains that other government broadcasters are also cutting back on shortwave and going to FM. The British Broadcasting Corporation website explicitly shows a reduction in shortwave service. The Broadcasting Board of Governors, facing budget shortfalls, has mandated cuts in the budget of IBB shortwave broadcasting stations worldwide. Stations in Spain, Portugal, and Greece have already closed. The Morocco station may be next.

### Possible Closure of the Transmitting Station

Facing budget limitations, the IBB has determined that with a reduction in shortwave broadcasting and the increased emphasis on FM, the Morocco station may be expendable. To continue Moroccan operations, the IBB has focused on reduction of rent payments to the Moroccan government for budget relief, and failing that, exam-

ining other areas for savings, such as reducing staff and electricity costs by limiting the operating hours of the station. Salaries, electrical power, and rent each make up about 30 percent of the total budget. From the start of operations in 1993 through FY 2006, the IBB has paid over \$40 million in rent and what started at \$1.3 million per year has grown to \$2.4 million this year. The lease also has an annual escalator clause that will further raise rental costs. In February 2007, the U.S government gave a one year advance notice (required under current lease terms) that stipulated that, failing relief on the rent, the station will close and all remaining property will be returned to the government of Morocco in March 2008.

The embassy has undertaken negotiations, but at the time of the on-site inspection, the initial reaction from the Moroccan government was one of indifference; certainly not encouraging. At that time, mission management believed that continued embassy pressure might cause a change of heart although actual decisions could move at a glacial pace. The major selling points are the residual \$6 million dollars flowing into the local economy and the 52 jobs in an economically depressed area of the country. IBB has since reexamined the need for the station and looked at viable options to keep it operating, and has also renewed negotiations aimed at achieving partial rent relief instead of the total amount as initially proposed. The Moroccan government's response has been more encouraging, and there is general consensus that with some flexibility by the Moroccans, and some budget and operational adjustments by IBB, the station will continue to operate for the next four to seven years. IBB informed the OIG team that it would make every effort to maintain the station, but there was still the possibility that it could close.

To the OIG team, simply walking away from this model facility would appear to be shortsighted for want of \$2 million dollars. IBB's initial negotiating posture, now modified because the station is needed for the short term, begs the question whether IBB's initial assumption to close failing relief of \$2.4 million was advisable. IBB maintains that it reviews policy, targets audiences, and the means to reach the audience annually. However, if that process had been effective, then IBB should have known that it needed the station to some extent irrespective of the budget shortfall.

In order to examine the wisdom of the strategy, a thorough worldwide study including residual value of property and equipment, technical issues of propagation of radio waves, the potential need for contingency shortwave broadcasting operations, as well as policy decisions on the future targets of U.S. broadcasting must be part of the equation, a task beyond the scope or expertise of the OIG team inspecting U.S. operations in Morocco.

Whether it remains open, operates at a reduced rate, or closes in seven years, the station has significant residual value. Besides the obvious tools, spare parts, vehicles, and office furniture and equipment (and possibly the scrap value of the tons of copper and aluminum in the cables and antennas), the most valuable equipment are the satellite receivers and the 10 500KW transmitters. Moreover, the continued support to Radio Sawa throughout Africa and Morocco still has to be maintained. There may be a requirement to maintain some residual staff and, if the remaining staff is reduced, funds for severance payments and possible litigation need to be identified, and a drawdown strategy devised in close coordination with the embassy.

The technicians estimate that demobilizing the transmitters alone could require four to five months. Subtracting five months from the March 2008 deadline means that significant activity must start by the beginning of October 2007. Neither the station nor the embassy has started or been advised of any such planning by IBB. Equally, should demobilization take place, at some point it will proceed to the point where economic restoration will have passed.

The OIG team was not able to evaluate the merits of closure of one IBB facility without an examination of worldwide broadcast policy goals and the technical means to achieve them.

In a separate report, *Inspection of the International Broadcasting Bureau's Morocco Transmitting Station*, ISP-IB-08-05, the OIG team recommended that IBB, together with other stakeholders, prepare a careful worldwide study of the future targets of U.S. broadcasting, residual value of property and equipment, closeout costs, the potential need for contingency shortwave broadcasting operations, and technical issues of propagation of radio waves prior to making an irreversible decision to close the Morocco transmitting station. The OIG team also recommended that IBB, in coordination with Embassy Rabat, decide on a date after which negotiations would be fruitless and review its legal obligations under the lease and to the locally employed staff and prepare and distribute a demobilization plan (including alternate uses of the equipment) for the transmitting station in Morocco.

## Management Issues

The facilities are exceptionally well maintained, neat, and orderly. Administrative operations managed by a small staff are performed in accordance with policy and regulation. Embassy support is infrequent, but sufficient. The embassy-prepared staffing pattern for the station shows an authorized staff of five Americans and 63 LE staff. One American and 11 LE staff positions were vacant with no near-term plans to fill. Some of the LE staff positions are not being filled pending a decision

on closure, a rational decision that does not adversely affect ongoing operations. The one vacant American position has been vacant for some time, and there are no plans to fill it. When asked by the OIG team why carry the positions and incur ICASS and other costs, the IBB response was that the cost was modest and that the position was there “just in case.” Of what is not clear. The President’s Management Initiative places great emphasis at better managing overseas positions. Simply carrying positions with no firm duties on the books is not acceptable. OIG’s report on the inspection of the transmitting station recommends that IBB abolish the vacant position.

Equally, the station has a regional support officer position (96434). The incumbent spends the vast majority of his time traveling to negotiate additional FM stations in the region. The embassy has no clear record of the intended duties of the position or if the incumbent is performing the duties as described in the original position description. If the station remains open, the need for the position in Morocco will require examination. In the transmitting station report, the OIG team recommended that IBB provide a National Security Decision Directive-38 request for the continued need for the regional support officer.

## FORMAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recommendation 1:** Embassy Rabat should request the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs to fund the reinstatement of regular periodic opinion polling in Morocco by the Bureau of Intelligence and Research. (Action: Embassy Rabat)
- Recommendation 2:** Embassy Rabat should conduct a structural analysis of the total staff support for Middle East Partnership Initiative programs presently provided by the economic and public affairs sections that could be conducted by eligible family members and request adequate financial resources from the Middle East Partnership Initiative to fund that work. (Action: Embassy Rabat)
- Recommendation 3:** Embassy Rabat should assess its contacts management requirements and, based on those needs, design and implement a mission-wide, user-friendly contacts management system, and train all staff in the use of the system. (Action: Embassy Rabat)
- Recommendation 4:** Embassy Rabat should prepare cost estimates and submit them to the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, which should approve funding to refurbish Osborne House as a residence suitable for two single employees or couples without children. (Action: Embassy Rabat, in coordination with OBO)
- Recommendation 5:** Embassy Rabat should stop collecting charges for personal calls on official telephones and issue the Department's policy regarding this issue. (Action: Embassy Rabat)
- Recommendation 6:** Embassy Rabat should update the Sensitive But Unclassified contingency plan and put in place procedures to test the plan annually or when major modifications are made. (Action: Embassy Rabat)
- Recommendation 7:** Embassy Rabat should develop and implement an information management training program. (Action: Embassy Rabat)
- Recommendation 8:** Embassy Rabat should perform monthly or quarterly unannounced cash reconciliations for all subcashiers and submit copies of the verification to the U.S. Disbursing Officer. (Action: Embassy Rabat)



**Recommendation 9:** Embassy Rabat should establish limits and monitor sales of duty-free alcohol and tobacco by the Embassy Cooperative Association. (Action: Embassy Rabat)

**Recommendation 10:** Embassy Rabat should cross-train another locally employed staff employee to do American citizens services work and assist the unit when required in Consulate General Casablanca. (Action: Embassy Rabat)

## 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.

### EMBASSY RABAT

#### *Executive Direction*

The work of embassy sections and agencies has often been compartmentalized.

**Informal Recommendation 1:** The embassy should continue to expand its efforts to promote greater communication within the embassy to assure maximum coordination of goals and programs.

#### *Management*

Embassy Rabat is responsible for supporting the IBB Morocco Transmitting Station's operations.

**Informal Recommendation 2:** Embassy Rabat should negotiate and prepare a schedule of support visits to the transmitting station.

#### *Human Resources*

Embassy Rabat does not have a reduction in force plan.

**Informal Recommendation 3:** Embassy Rabat should prepare and publish a reduction in force plan.

Embassy Rabat does not have an SIV policy.

**Informal Recommendation 4:** Embassy Rabat should prepare and publish a special immigrant visa policy.

Embassy Rabat does not have an SIV committee.

**Informal Recommendation 5:** Embassy Rabat should appoint a special immigrant visa committee.

### ***Housing***

Embassy Rabat does not have written procedures outlining responsibilities and communications among the various units that are involved in housing.

**Informal Recommendation 6:** Embassy Rabat should write and implement standard operating procedures on the housing process delineating responsibilities and methods of communication.

### ***Facilities Maintenance***

Embassy Rabat is responsible for providing facilities maintenance support to Consulate General Casablanca but has no plan for providing support.

**Informal Recommendation 7:** Embassy Rabat should prepare a schedule for providing maintenance support to Consulate General Casablanca.

Embassy Rabat has a preventive maintenance program in Rabat and Casablanca but has no tracking mechanism to ensure that the work is actually performed.

**Informal Recommendation 8:** Embassy Rabat should create a system to track preventive maintenance items in the embassy and Consulate General Casablanca.

### ***International Cooperative Administrative Support Service***

Embassy Rabat's ICASS chairman has not taken any ICASS training.

**Informal Recommendation 9:** Embassy Rabat should provide the International Cooperative Administrative Support Services chairman with the appropriate training.

Embassy Rabat's ICASS standards are not reviewed annually.

**Informal Recommendation 10:** Embassy Rabat should review service standards at least annually and update those service standards if needed.

### ***Financial Management***

Embassy Rabat staff do not always submit travel vouchers within five working days after completion of authorized travel as required by 4 FAH-3 H-465.1-1.

**Informal Recommendation 11:** Embassy Rabat should ensure employees submit a voucher for reimbursement of travel expenses within five workdays after completion of authorized travel.

Some of the financial management office's management notices and standard operating procedures are not updated.

**Informal Recommendation 12:** Embassy Rabat should update the financial management office's management notices and standard operating procedures as required.

### ***Equal Employment Opportunity***

The recently named EEO counselor has not taken the EEO training.

**Informal Recommendation 13:** Embassy Rabat should train the Equal Employment Opportunity counselor before he provides any Equal Employment Opportunity counseling.

Embassy Rabat has not appointed a Federal Women's Program manager.

**Informal Recommendation 14:** Embassy Rabat should name a Federal Women's Program manager.

### ***Management Controls***

There are too many subcashiers in the consular section in Consulate General Casablanca.

**Informal Recommendation 15:** Embassy Rabat should reduce the number of subcashiers in the consular section at Consulate General Casablanca.

At Consulate General Casablanca, unannounced verifications of the subcashiers' advances and cash verification of Class B cashier advance are conducted regularly at the same time each month.

**Informal Recommendation 16:** Embassy Rabat should conduct cash verifications randomly throughout the month at Consulate General Casablanca.

## CONSULATE GENERAL CASABLANCA

### *Resource Management*

Neither the embassy nor the consulate general has analyzed the administrative workload to determine the resource cost of adding additional American staff.

**Informal Recommendation 17:** Embassy Rabat should analyze the administrative workload of affected sections and determine resource costs for additional American personnel in Consulate General Casablanca.

The consulate general's EEO counselor has not taken the yearly mandatory refresher EEO training course.

**Informal Recommendation 18:** Embassy Rabat should require the Equal Employment Opportunity counselor for Consulate General Casablanca to take the yearly mandatory refresher Equal Employment Opportunity training course.

The consulate general's EEO counselor is leaving post, and no one has been identified to be the next EEO counselor.

**Informal Recommendation 19:** Embassy Rabat should identify and train a volunteer to serve as the Equal Employment Opportunity counselor in Consulate General Casablanca.

The consulate general does not have an active Federal Women's Program or a Federal Women's Program Manager named.

**Informal Recommendation 20:** Embassy Rabat should establish a Federal Women's Program and identify a Federal Women's Program manager in Consulate General Casablanca.

Consulate General Casablanca does not keep copies of inventory and reconciliation records for its expendable and nonexpendable items or contracts of services that it receives.

**Informal Recommendation 21:** Embassy Rabat should provide Consulate General Casablanca with copies of the consulate general's inventory and reconciliation records for expendable and nonexpendable items and contracts that provide services to the consulate general.

Consulate General Casablanca's purchase orders do not show important transactional information, such as determination of price reasonableness and the systematic presentation of cost.

**Informal Recommendation 22:** Embassy Rabat should direct Consulate General Casablanca to include transactional informational information, such as determination of price reasonableness and the systematic presentation of cost in its purchase orders.

Consulate Casablanca's procurement folders (DS-1918) are not reviewed and signed by the contracting officer.

**Informal Recommendation 23:** Embassy Rabat should require Consulate General Casablanca's contracting officer to review and sign procurement folders (DS-1918) periodically.

A plumber and an electrician who work under BPAs report to the consulate general building in the mornings to get work orders. This may create an employee/employer relationship.

**Informal Recommendation 24:** Embassy Rabat should direct Consulate General Casablanca to amend the blanket purchase agreements, if it is appropriate to use this employment vehicle, to specify how services are placed to avoid an employee/employer relationship.

Consulate General Casablanca has not fully implemented all the recommendations of the 2006 SHEM report and fire report.

**Informal Recommendation 25:** Embassy Rabat should implement and report on corrective actions for the 2006 Fire and the 2006 Safety, Health, and Environmental Management reports for Consulate General Casablanca.

Consulate General Casablanca has no training plan for LE staff. It appears that Embassy Rabat LE staff get first priority in training.

**Informal Recommendation 26:** Embassy Rabat should develop a training plan and prioritize the training for locally employed staff in Consulate General Casablanca.

### *Consular*

Currently the consulate general's FO-03 consular section deputy does not manage any visa unit.

**Informal Recommendation 27:** Embassy Rabat should assign Consulate General Casablanca's FO-03 consular officer the additional duty of managing the consular section's fraud prevention unit.

Once inside the visa waiting area all nonimmigrant, immigrant, and diversity visa applicants must line up at the cashier's window to turn in their documents and pay fees. As nonimmigrant visa applicants use the off-site fee collection, they only need to submit their application and passport and do not require cashier services.

**Informal Recommendation 28:** Embassy Rabat should open a separate nonimmigrant visa intake window should be open in the consulate general's visa waiting room.

The new DHS visa security unit intends to focus its operations on counterterrorism, as related to visa and U.S. border security.

**Informal Recommendation 29:** Embassy Rabat should develop standard operating procedures between Consulate General Casablanca's consular fraud prevention unit and the Department of Homeland Security's visa security unit to ensure cases involving fraud and those concerning terrorists are handled by the appropriate entities.

The FPU does not routinely check all documents submitted with nonimmigrant and immigrant visa applications. Suspected fraudulent documents are sent to FPU by adjudicating officers.

**Informal Recommendation 30:** Embassy Rabat should require the consulate general's fraud prevention unit to collect samples and compile a binder of genuine Moroccan fraudulent documents for visa line officers to use in determining whether to refer cases to the unit.

## PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Arrival Date</b>
Ambassador	Thomas T. Riley	12/04
Deputy Chief of Mission	Wayne J. Bush	07/03
Chiefs of Sections:		
Management (Acting)	Victor E. Manley	07/06
Consular (Casablanca)	Matthew McKeever	09/04
Political	Craig M. Karp	09/06
Economic	Stuart M. Smith	07/06
Public Affairs	Evelyn E. Early	08/05
Regional Security	George G. Frederick	08/06
Other Agencies:		
Foreign Agricultural Service	Michael Fay	08/04
Office of Defense Cooperation	LTC Antonio Banchs	09/06
Defense Attaché	Col. David Solomon	09/05
Force Protection Attaché	Al Myers	12/04
Foreign Commercial Service (Casablanca)	Enrique Ortiz	06/05
U.S. Agency for International Development	Monica Stein-Olson	08/04
Legal Attaché	Andre Khoury	08/06
Peace Corps	Bruce Cohen	01/03
Broadcasting Board of Governors (Tangiers)	David Strawman	08/04





## ABBREVIATIONS

ACS	American citizens services
BPA	Blanket purchase agreement
CLO	Community liaison office
DAO	Defense attaché office
DCM	Deputy chief of mission
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunity
ELO	Entry-level officer
EUCOM	European Command
FM	Frequency modulation
FPU	Fraud prevention unit
GSO	General services office(r)
IBB	International Broadcasting Bureau
ICASS	International Cooperative Administrative Support Services
IM	Information management
IMO	Information management officer
IRC	Information Resource Center
LE	Locally employed
MCC	Millennium Challenge Corporation
MEPI	Middle East Partnership Initiative
MSP	Mission Strategic Plan
NSDD	National Security Decision Directive
OBO	Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations

ODC	Office of Defense cooperation
OIG	Office of Inspector General
PAS	Public affairs section
RSO	Regional security officer
SHEM	Office of Safety, Health, and Environmental Management
SIV	Special immigrant visa
SW	Shortwave
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
USFCS	U.S. Foreign and Commercial Service
WQLQ	Workplace and Quality of Life Questionnaire

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~