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

# Report of Inspection

Embassy Lusaka, Zambia

Report Number ISP-I-05-39A, September 2005

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- Despite its location some distance from the chancery, the public affairs section (PAS) is integrated into the priority activities of the mission. OIG believes the PAS's well-funded and active programs would have more impact if the PAS and embassy targeted them more strategically.
- The political/economic section is strong. OIG supports the embassy's MPP request that the Department continue to fill the post's entry-level, Diplomatic Readiness Initiative position.

The inspection took place in Washington, DC, between April 4 and 28, 2005, and in Lusaka, Zambia, between May 16 and 27, 2005. Ambassador Vincent Battle (team leader), Deborah Klepp (deputy team leader), Ronald Harms, Jennifer Noisette, James E. Peters, and Katherine Schultz conducted the inspection.

## CONTEXT

In a pluralistic and relatively stable political environment where no presidential

elections are due until 2006, the Zambian government devotes much of its energy to reversing the economic decline that characterized the country over many years. It has had some success; the economy has grown for six consecutive years. The vast majority of Zambia's people work in subsistence agriculture, and the government focuses its anti-poverty efforts on supporting farmers. Agriculture, however, accounts for only some 15 percent of the nation's gross domestic product. The spike in economic performance in Zambia is more tied to growth in



copper mining, with privatization of major, formerly state-owned, mining companies beginning in 2000 and new interest in foreign direct investment in the sector. Although mining is down from its peak performance of decades ago, the sector is again Zambia's biggest export earner.

Given Zambia's heavy dependence on credits and financial assistance from bilateral donors and international financial institutions, policymakers there are closely attuned to the views and prescriptions of such organizations as the International Monetary Fund. In 2004, the Fund approved a three-year, poverty reduction and economic growth facility that is setting tight parameters on Zambia's economic performance. The program's chief goal is fiscal consolidation, and it is reducing non-priority spending and holding government wages steady. The program aims to redirect expenditures to education and health care, including the campaign against HIV/AIDS, and to reduce Zambia's hefty fiscal deficit. Other priorities are reducing government corruption, enhancing the efficiency of the private sector, and moving privatization forward.

Relations between the United States and Zambia are good. Although frictions surface occasionally, links between the countries are expanding. The United States has four principal strategic goals for its bilateral ties with Zambia: improving the country's dangerous health situation; strengthening democratic institutions, including the government's anti-corruption drive; fostering economic growth and development; and ensuring effective cooperation in counterterrorism. The Department of State (Department), USAID, Defense Intelligence Agency, the Treasury Department's Office of Technical Assistance (OTA), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the Peace Corps are furthering these goals. The embassy employs 50 direct-hire officers and more than 250 locally employed staff (LES) and third-country nationals. The embassy operating and program budget is just over \$4 million. Funding under PEPFAR will reach nearly \$133 million this year. There are more than 140 Peace Corps volunteers in the country, and a new group was to arrive shortly after the inspection.

Because Zambia is a focus of PEPFAR, Embassy Lusaka has fielded a strong interagency team to help address Zambia's most serious health challenge. Implementation of PEPFAR has experienced some irritations. Tight deadlines sometimes resulted in faulty coordination with Zambian authorities and other partners. A requirement to dedicate a fixed percentage of funds to the purchase of antiretroviral drugs has encountered a lack of compatibility between the U.S. and Zambian lists of approved pharmaceuticals. On the upside, the Department of Defense component of the FY 2005 PEPFAR program is the single largest Defense Department HIV/AIDS program in the world.

The embassy's democracy and governance team is supporting the Zambian government's initiatives to improve governance, strengthen human rights protections, and root out endemic corruption. The pace of reform is slow, and measurable outcomes are few, but the embassy believes that U.S. engagement has helped avoid derailment of the anti-corruption drive and has encouraged parliamentary reform. The current focus is on the 2006 presidential elections.

U.S. agencies at the embassy coordinate effectively to support Zambia's commitment to economic policies that promote private sector-led growth. This approach is not always popular because some opinion leaders in Zambia espouse socialism and a state-controlled economic development strategy. Further, some Zambians still smart over what they perceive as the pernicious effects of previous economic prescriptions doled out by the international financial institutions. Despite this, the embassy has effectively used the Millennium Challenge Account,







## EXECUTIVE DIRECTION

### LEADERSHIP

The embassy's strong leadership includes an Ambassador who is a career member of the senior Foreign Service, has been Ambassador in Lusaka for two and a half years, and has three years' experience as chief of mission at another African post. He also has other lengthy experience in African affairs and brings this experience to bear on his work at a time when the mission's activities are growing exponentially in response to PEPFAR. All members of the country team praise the ambassador's leadership. He is said to be knowledgeable and reflective and to have successfully integrated the work of multiple agencies regarding the health crisis in Zambia and such MPP priorities as good governance, economic growth, and counterterrorism.

The Ambassador has encouraged an inclusive MPP process, and the deputy chief of mission (DCM) has directed the interagency participation that has led to a clear and integrated MPP that accords with the strategic plans of other agencies at post and provides them with a point of reference. Given the surge in HIV/AIDS work, the substantial increase in funding from the Office of the U.S. Global Aids Coordinator (S/GAC), and the static budget for operational support, the embassy may be nearing the point where its leadership will have to find ways of saying no to additional programming.

The DCM has been at post for just under one year, and also has extensive African experience. He has put his background to good use, combining area expertise with high energy and an openness toward people throughout the U.S. government community. His success is attested to by the results of OIG questionnaires. The Ambassador-DCM division of labor follows the traditional pattern, and the DCM has rapidly developed a comprehensive understanding of all embassy operations he oversees. He is good at seeing the big picture and also keeps an eye on details. His quick mastery of operations flows from the fact that he is a hands-on manager and is visibly present throughout the mission. When necessary, he has intervened to resolve problems between colleagues and has counseled those with performance problems.



The executive team's energetic mobilization of the U.S. government workforce on HIV/AIDS is exemplary but is only one element of the embassy's success on this score. The embassy has also helped ensure the greatest possible coordination with all Zambian entities working on HIV/AIDS and among donors and nongovernmental and faith-based organizations that are full partners with the United States in this effort. Only three days prior to the inspection team's arrival, the embassy joined with the Zambian government in hosting an all-day workshop aimed at reviewing the FY 2004 U.S. government program and rolling out plans for coming years. The enthusiastic participation of all stakeholders in the HIV/AIDS campaign reflects the success of the embassy's leadership.

In what turned out to be a complicated process, the embassy hired a full-time Department coordinator, who reports directly to the executive office, to ensure broad cooperation on HIV/AIDS matters. Funding for this position came from S/GAC, and policymakers overseeing PEPFAR implementation see the hiring of such a coordinator as essential. OIG agrees. The Department's mechanisms for hiring such an individual, however, are inadequate. In the case of Zambia, the embassy identified and hired a highly qualified American who was resident temporarily in Zambia. However, the embassy could only offer employment under Personal Services Agreement Plus authority at the FSN-11 grade. Recognizing the inadequacy of this mechanism, the DCM, in conjunction with CDC, crafted a way to retain this individual's expertise under CDC's personal services contract authority. This initiative appears to be on track, but having to resort to the hiring mechanism of another agency underscores a flaw in S/GAC's approach of keeping coordination in the hands of the Department. Solutions to this issue are beyond the scope of this inspection, and Embassy Lusaka's locally designed solution worked. The S/GAC, however, needs to review hiring mechanisms for country coordinators to oversee emergency plan implementation. The team reviewed this issue with S/GAC after its return, and S/GAC agreed to conduct the review.

Interagency coordination at Embassy Lusaka extends to such other matters as how USAID and the Department work hand in glove on the MPP priorities of economic growth and democracy and governance. At the time of the inspection, coordination was particularly sharp on election reform and fiscal responsibility. At the Ambassador's behest, the OTA opened an office in Zambia to bring its expertise to bear on the anti-corruption drive. OTA is also gearing up to advise Zambian officials in banking regulation and debt management.



away. USAID's compound and the chancery are at capacity, and any further staff expansion will necessitate adding additional space to an already complex U.S. government inventory.

OBO is reluctant to approve funding for the temporary fixes that will help Embassy Lusaka bridge the period until the NEC is ready for occupancy. Nonetheless, the needs are urgent, and the Ambassador and DCM have appropriately encouraged management to identify interim facilities for the PAS and the GSO/USAID warehouses. Neither search has born fruit, but they remain a priority. USAID, with S/GAC funding, is ready to begin construction of a \$400,000 annex on its compound for its growing staff. At the same time, USAID will use its own security funds to upgrade the compound's perimeter. CDC, which also has staff at the chancery and in Zambian health facilities is seeking authorization to lease additional office space at the Intercontinental Hotel, where OTA also hopes to lease space. Both agencies are seeking collocation waivers for these projects. The Peace Corps, meanwhile, is upgrading security at its current location, where it will remain for the long term.

## ENTRY-LEVEL PROGRAM

The number of entry-level personnel at Embassy Lusaka is small, numbering no more than seven individuals, and disparate. OIG met with a group that was multiagency and consisted of specialists and generalists. No formal entry-level program exists at the embassy, although the collegial nature of the mission means that such personnel are included in activities beyond the scope of their jobs and portfolios, receive informal mentoring from colleagues, and are encouraged to participate in embassy outreach programs such as Black History month. Embassy management was very supportive of maximum participation by its entry-level personnel at the regional entry-level conference, held earlier this year in South Africa, where four people from Lusaka attended. The DCM followed up this participation with a lessons-learned session. The DCM is readily accessible to all staff, and provides effective career mentoring when asked. There is, however, scope for greater clarity and focus to an entry-level program. OIG informally recommended strengthening this activity.



**Recommendation 1:** Embassy Lusaka should implement regularly scheduled quarterly meetings between post management and the Foreign Service national committee to discuss the conditions of service of the Foreign Service national community and management's actions and constraints to improve them. (Action: Embassy Lusaka)





## POLICY AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

### MISSION PERFORMANCE PLAN

As noted, the embassy is a model of interagency cooperation. Coordination is virtually seamless on global health issues, but also impressive on the goals of economic growth, democracy and governance, and counterterrorism. Even greater synergies might be identified were the implementers of strategies that support those three goals to meet more regularly to review progress. Embassy Lusaka's MPP reflects overall U.S. priorities in Zambia, but does not always capture the extent of post's activity on each goal. OIG believes the MPP would be more useful if strategies and tactics more accurately reflected each agency and section's contributions. OIG believes that the PAS and public diplomacy section can be better integrated into individual goal papers. OIG informally recommended that the embassy determine which tactics are priorities for the PAS and public diplomacy efforts.

### POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

Embassy Lusaka's political/economic section (pol/econ) is one of the strongest OIG has seen. The section's advocacy with the host government, the opposition, nongovernmental organizations, and the Zambian public is active and effective. It works seamlessly and successfully with other agencies. Pol/econ, which the embassy combined in 2002, ensures that Washington policymakers and analysts are abreast of unfolding events by reporting via e-mail and then following up with comprehensive telegrams. The experienced pol/econ chief expertly manages the section's three officers, three EFMs, and two FSNs. OIG suggested ways that pol/econ might satisfy Washington's requests for more reporting and plans to pursue with USAID and AF better support for and training of self-help grant coordinators. OIG will also explore with the Foreign Service Institute the establishment of a distance-learning course for EFM and FSN office management specialists.

The driving force behind the remarkable interagency coordination is the executive office team. The Department's assignment in 2003 of an entry-level Diplomatic Readiness Initiative officer gave the pol/econ section enough staffing to become the backbone of this synergy. The Department has assigned a second Diplomatic Readiness Initiative officer, from the summer of 2005 to the summer of 2007, but has indicated it will not fill the position again. U.S. interests in Zambia are increasing. Unless there is a significant deterioration in relations, the embassy would be hard stretched to advance all U.S. goals without the Diplomatic Readiness Initiative position. Therefore, OIG supports the embassy's MPP request that the Department continue to fill this entry-level position.

OIG concurs with the many Washington policymakers and analysts who praised the embassy's award-winning political and economic reporting. The reporting is well written, clearly and tightly organized, richly sourced, comprehensive, and forward looking. Leadership information is skillfully integrated, and the reporting, when appropriate, conveys the embassy's advocacy intentions and policy suggestions. Washington users say they could use more reporting on economics, HIV/AIDS, and transnational threats. OIG proposed ways for the section to develop its three EFMs and two FSNs to do more reporting and encouraged the pol/econ section to work more closely with the PAS. OIG also made some technical suggestions to increase telegram dissemination and encouraged the pol/econ section to continue to organize and archive files.

The section spends about one quarter of its time on economic and commercial work, which is evenly divided between policy advocacy and representation in Zambia and reporting to and coordinating with Washington. The section's economic work focuses on promoting the Zambian government's commitment to economic reform and monitoring the Zambian government's progress on achieving macroeconomic objectives, particularly completion of commitments under the International Monetary Fund and World Bank's Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiative. The section also monitors the policy aspects of Zambian agriculture, such as how the poor harvest expected in 2005 could cause budgetary strain and affect exports. On the commercial front, the Ambassador hosts quarterly meetings of the American business community and engages in outreach with the government to address concerns. The executive office and pol/econ section meet with U.S. company representatives expressing interest in doing business in Zambia.

The experienced pol/econ section chief manages expertly. Her weekly, 30-minute staff meetings are a model of efficiency. The chief conveys necessary information and anticipates its implications for the pol/econ section's work and the section's support for the rest of the mission. She solicits her staff's input and

reviews workloads, and pol/econ staff freely contribute their views and actively ensure they organize their work to back each other up. The political assistant has a nuanced understanding of the complicated Zambian political scene and the contacts to support political work. The economic/commercial assistant is one of the most effective such officers that OIG has seen. The section's talents, in fact, could be used to do more reporting. The political assistant's evaluations have been more than six months late for the past two years. OIG informally recommended that the political/economic section develop a system to ensure that all evaluations are completed on time. The motivated EFM office management specialist is new to the Department and would be much more effective with training.

The embassy has hired two EFMs to run the Ambassador's self-help grant program, which had over \$68,000 in FY 2004, and to work on democracy and human rights grants, which had FY 2004 funding of \$80,000. PEPFAR funding in FY 2005, meanwhile, is expected to double the amount of small grants. The two EFMs have developed standard operating procedures and are working with USAID to close out several old grants. USAID finds the current procedures burdensome and time consuming. OIG encouraged the embassy and USAID Lusaka to jointly simplify and clarify procedures for the timely handling and closing out of self-help grants. OIG plans to pursue with AF better support, guidance, and training for self-help grant coordinators.

**Recommendation 2:** Embassy Lusaka should work with the U.S. Agency for International Development mission in Lusaka to clarify and simplify procedures for timely handling and closing out of self-help grants. (Action: Embassy Lusaka)

## PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS<sup>1</sup>

The public affairs officer (PAO), public diplomacy officer (an EFM educational advisor), and the 14 FSNs in the PAS implement active, creative, and valuable programs. The PAS reports effectively on media placements and PAS activities.

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<sup>1</sup>In this report, public diplomacy refers to the function of engaging, informing, and influencing key international audiences. The PAS directs public diplomacy.

PAS has received \$275,000 of PEPFAR funding, increasing its budget to \$725,000 in FY 2005. Within this context, OIG suggested several ways that the PAS could be integrated more closely into mission priorities to increase the impact of PAS programming. With the increased workload and HR challenges aggravated by HIV/AIDs in Zambia, OIG also proposed ways the PAS can enhance its cross-training and teambuilding.

## Planning and Assessment

PAS programming is active and creative, but would have more impact were PAS to target programming more strategically. The PAS developed its FY 2005 operational plan in support of the five non-administrative MPP goals at a day-long retreat in November 2004. This strategic approach would be easier were the embassy to identify the tactics most in need of public diplomacy tools. OIG also encouraged the PAS to conduct and submit the annual influence-analysis report, which has not been done in at least two years. Were the PAS to focus greater programming on the groups and institutions that influence the audiences that are key to priority MPP tactics, PAS programming would have more impact. Finally, the current MPP includes a performance goal paper on international public opinion. OIG believes that the PAS's media work should be more clearly reflected in the other performance goal papers, not as a stand-alone goal. If the embassy chooses to retain a stand-alone goal paper for public diplomacy and public affairs, OIG suggests that a goal paper on mutual understanding would better reflect overall embassy efforts.

## Program Coordination

The PAS staff values the convenient public access and programming flexibility their separate facility provides. Yet almost all staff members feel divorced from the embassy. The PAS facility is 15 to 30-minute drive from the embassy. It includes a large information resource center (IRC), a spacious multi-purpose room with digital videoconferencing equipment, an audio-visual room, an airy reception area, two small kitchens, and individual offices. Many in the section said embassy employees rarely make the trek to PAS unless invited to an event. The PAO coordinates with the rest of the embassy and travels to the chancery compound almost daily for meetings, including weekly sessions with the DCM, country team meetings, and emergency action plan sessions. Other PAS staff attend meetings at the chancery compound only infrequently. To integrate PAS work more closely into mission priorities, OIG suggested that the PAS invite officers and staff implementing the

various MPP goal papers to the PAS to collaborate on public diplomacy and public affairs planning. The PAS staff would also contribute much if it attended the weekly pol/econ section's staff meetings.

## Media Support and Information Outreach

The PAO is the embassy's spokesperson. She, two FSN information assistants, an FSN audio-visual technician, an FSN distribution clerk, and an FSN PAO secretary provide strong media affairs support. At the country team meeting that OIG observed, almost every participant expressed appreciation for past public affairs coordination by the PAS and highlighted upcoming events. The PAS is very effective at placing in local media press statements about PAS-coordinated media events. Non-PAS embassy officers praised the knowledge and contacts of the two FSN information assistants. The PAS reports regularly on its activities, and Washington consumers complimented the section's initiative in February 2005, when it began disseminating daily news summaries of reporting of interest culled from Zambian print and electronic media. OIG encouraged the PAS to consider broadening its e-mail distribution of this "News from Zambia" to include every embassy employee. These summaries could also be placed on the embassy's internal web site. In addition, the PAS e-mails regular media reaction and activity highlight reports to Washington and compiles two monthly cables on placements in Zambian media.

The PAS conducts active information advocacy, but is much less successful at placing in the media generic advocacy materials that were developed in Washington. Each day, PAS e-mails Washington File articles of interest to 30 Zambian contacts and distributes 80 paper copies of the compilation. The PAS supplements its press and media outreach with a cluster of activities once a month. These combine speakers, live or via digital videoconference, supported by high-quality information packets. In a good example of high-impact PAS programming, for the May 3 World Press Freedom Day the PAS convinced the government-owned broadcasting company to do a free broadcast of a PAS-convened panel debated with an audience of politicians, writers, and civil society groups the role of the media in good governance. The PAS has begun implementing its speaker bureau program and is recruiting direct-hire and FSN staff to speak at public events. OIG encouraged the PAS to take more advantage of digital videoconferencing, particularly to support MPP priorities. OIG also noted PAS's desire to improve its understanding of how Zambians view the United States and supported the section's plan, reflected in the MPP, to ask the Bureau of Intelligence and Research to conduct polling in Zambia.

## Educational and Cultural Affairs and the Information Resource Center

The public diplomacy officer has an FSN public affairs specialist, EFM educational advisor, FSN cultural assistant, and FSN secretary/receptionist. The officer manages the embassy's exchange programs, alumni activities, and cultural programming. In FY 2004, PAS supported two Zambian and five U.S. Fulbright grantees, one Humphrey fellow and ten international visitors. The PAS publicized this year's Fulbright and Humphrey application season widely, receiving over 200 requests for Humphrey fellowship applications. Exchange panels include interagency representation. In a banner achievement, the public diplomacy officer spearheaded the creation and February 2005 launch of Zambia's first Fulbright Alumni Association with 36 members. This was especially challenging because the PAS had to work closely with the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs to recreate the records of previous Fulbright grantees. PAS grants reflect MPP priorities, the grant review panel includes interagency representatives, and grant files are well organized.

The public diplomacy officer, the FSN IRC director, and two FSN IRC assistants manage the IRC's Martin Luther King library, which has been one of the best in Zambia since 1975. In January, the Ambassador rededicated the library, inaugurating its new Internet Café, which offers free Internet access on six high-speed workstations. The IRC serves the information needs of government, academia, civil society, business, and students. Each week it hosts over 300 users and responds to over 50 reference queries. Its reference collection reflects MPP priorities and is impressively up to date, with \$50,000 budgeted for materials in FY 2005. The PAS developed the detailed FY 2005 IRC performance plan in conjunction with the regional information resource officer. As noted, the PAS will be able to meet the plan's outreach and assessment goals more effectively if it coordinates more closely with other mission elements to identify target audience institutions and individuals. PAS benefits greatly from the twice-annual visits from the regional information resource officer and from regional training conferences in South Africa. The IRC has published a comprehensive brochure describing its services, maintains the embassy's public web site and supports the soon-to-be-opened American corner.

The PAS addresses younger, broader audiences in and around Lusaka through its free Internet Café and educational advising. The educational advisor holds a weekly orientation session for an average of 50 undergraduate and graduate students and provides personal advisory assistance to another 20 per week. The Ambassador will open an American Corner in Kitwe, Copperbelt Province, in June 2005, giving the embassy greater outreach to Zambia's industrial heartland. PAS

has also requested funding to open a second American Corner in Livingstone, Zambia's tourist hub near the border with Zimbabwe. OIG suggested that the PAS work more closely with other mission elements and exchange alumni to expand and deepen mission outreach to women and Muslims.

## Internal Management and Administrative Coordination

Two American officers manage the PAS well, emphasizing teamwork. The PAO is an experienced Civil Service officer on her second excursion tour. Her deputy is a second-tour Foreign Service officer. The PAO and her deputy coordinate programming details effectively, but have no regular meeting to confer regarding programming strategies or section management. To allow the PAO and the deputy to plan and implement the more strategic programming described in this report, OIG informally recommended that they meet twice weekly to discuss programming options and review workloads and staff performance. The PAO chairs a weekly PAS staff meeting that staff find informative and useful.

The PAS FSN staff is proud that the quantity and quality of PAS programming has improved over the past year. The PAS FSNs are relatively new to the embassy and have an average of three years experience. Although they uniformly appreciate their on-the-job and external training, the FSNs said additional training would make them more effective. They stressed that this training is most important during the first year on the job and unanimously questioned the logic underlying the Foreign Service Institute's requirement that FSNs have a minimum of two years experience before being able to take advantage of training funded by the Foreign Service Institute. Just before the inspection, the IRC director and one of the assistants completed a week of training in Pretoria, South Africa. They returned to Lusaka full of fresh ideas and renewed enthusiasm, noting how valuable it was to share experiences and network with other posts. In general, the team believes the Department could take better advantage of sending trainers to posts or at least conducting more regional training.

Although they are motivated, almost all of the PAS FSNs have salary and allowance concerns. Elsewhere in this report, OIG recommended a stronger dialogue between the FSNs and post management. PAS managers work hard to schedule the six weeks of annual leave that each FSN is permitted. But OIG observed that managing the workload is complicated by the FSNs' frequent absences due to chronic illness or their need to attend to family needs and funerals - an outgrowth of Zambia's high HIV/AIDS rate. In light of these challenges, OIG



informally recommended that the PAS hold regular unit meetings to review activities and workloads to allow PAS staff to be able to back each other up more effectively. OIG encouraged the PAS to continue efforts to cross-train staff.

OIG commended the PAO and financial management officer and their staffs for their close coordination to improve budgeting. The AF public diplomacy office reduced PAS's FY 2005 budget by \$50,000, partially because public diplomacy funds had not been obligated by the end of FY 2004. As a result, the current PAO, her secretary, and each PAS unit have instituted a system on the shared drive for each PAS staff member to track purchase order requests and obligations against the budget. The embassy has made great strides in improving procurement, but the PAS still has problems with some of its routine and complicated PAS-specific procurements. OIG informally recommended that the PAS and the general services office collaborate to identify ways to work together more effectively. At OIG's suggestion, the PAS will work with the information technology staff to implement Microsoft Outlook features for the PAS, including a PAS calendar and contact management database. The PAS looks forward to being able to input PAS contacts into a shared contact database. The section and the management office will continue to train PAS staff to use Travel Manager software, pending planned systems upgrades.

## Consular Operations

The consular section is ably managed by a Civil Service officer on an excursion tour, and this one-officer consular section had no major weaknesses. During a visit in April 2005, the regional consular officer helped the section prepare for the OIG inspection and identified several inventory control deficiencies that have since been corrected. The consular associate, who has visa adjudicating authority, will leave in June 2005. A second consular officer will arrive in September 2005, enabling the section chief to focus on improving disaster planning and revamping the warden system. The DCM, who has extensive consular experience, provides close oversight of the section and reviews the section chief's visa decisions. The referral system is functioning well with strong support from the executive office. In the last eight months, the Ambassador has hosted two large, town hall meetings for American citizens living in Zambia. He also weighs in with the Zambian government on consular issues, when necessary. The consular officer was involved in the preparation of the MPP. There is good coordination between the consular section and other sections of the embassy on border security issues.

## Staff

Two of the three consular FSNs have been working in the section for just two years and received training at the Foreign Service Institute. The third has been there less than a year. The consular officer is aware that the FSNs need more cross-training. With the addition of a second consular officer, the section chief will assume the responsibilities of embassy refugee officer, which is appropriate and will not affect his fulfillment of his consular duties. The consular officer, who has performed well in a traditionally hard-to-fill position, is a Civil Service officer on an excursion tour and, with the DCM's support, has requested a tour extension. OIG will discuss issues surrounding the extension of Civil Service officers on excursion tours with the Bureau of Human Resources in Washington.

## Space

Despite the efforts to keep files to a minimum by periodically sending them to the Department's Kentucky Consular Center, the consular work area is cramped. OBO has approved plans to expand the section by extending an exterior wall. Construction should begin in June 2005 and, when completed, will provide desk space for the two employees who now use interview windows as desks.

## Management

All three FSNs told OIG that they feel they are part of a unified consular team and that the consular officer encourages their input into decisions affecting the section. The consular officer stresses to them the importance of public service and is aware of rumors that some customers are treated rudely. After discussing this with the consular staff and observing visa interviews, OIG concluded that any customer dissatisfaction could likely be attributed to the relatively high visa refusal rate of over 40 percent.

The consular officer has already initiated with the public affairs officer a media effort to inform prospective students about educational opportunities in the United States. OIG informally recommended that the section expand this cooperative effort to include broad dissemination of other consular information. By doing so, it could provide anti-fraud warnings, reduce the number of public inquiries, encourage the use of the electronic visa application form, and explain the visa process, reducing misperceptions about the service. Although the embassy duty book requires the embassy duty officer to handle all but the most complicated after-hours

consular cases, OIG found that duty officers frequently pass responsibility for routine consular cases to the consular officer. OIG informally recommended that the embassy reiterate to all embassy officers on the duty roster their responsibility for following embassy duty policies, including handling most consular cases.

## Visas

The consular officer plans to have a summer-hire eligible family member conduct a validation study of visa issuances in the summer of 2005. This will give the section an idea of the accuracy of its visa decisions. The consular officer told OIG there is reason for concern over the vulnerabilities in the processing of family members, following-to-join asylum seekers, or refugees admitted to the United States (Visas 92 and 93 cases). Most of these cases come from the Democratic Republic of Congo. The officer has found identity and family relationships of the applicants difficult to verify because supporting documents come from outside Zambia. Some cases in which he requested DNA testing proved fraudulent. OIG informally recommended that the officer do a reporting cable to the Department, detailing his experiences with these cases and explaining his concerns.

## American Citizens Services

The consular officer believes that there may be 2,000 American citizens resident in Zambia, but many are not registered at the embassy. He also believes that the registration database contains many Americans who are no longer living in Zambia. He plans a major effort to update the registration database and the American citizen wardens' list. OIG encouraged him to do this promptly and to increase the number of wardens from 24. The officer also plans to increase official contacts in the Victoria Falls area, the most popular destination for American tourists in Zambia.

The consular section needs to better prepare for handling disasters, such as an airplane crash. OIG found that, although the emergency action plan covers the subject generally, the consular section has not prepared a specific plan of action, as recommended in the Disaster Assistance Handbook.

**Recommendation 3:** Embassy Lusaka should comply with suggestions for developing the consular emergency response plan that are in the Disaster Assistance Handbook, 12 FAH-1. (Action: Embassy Lusaka)

## Antifraud and Border Security

The consular section works well with the regional security office on fraud cases and receives border security information from other sections, when requested. OIG suggested that the consular officer and the DCM regularize the dissemination of such information by using the monthly Visas Viper meeting as a forum for discussing counterterrorism issues. The most serious fraud concern for consular work in Zambia is the unreliability of local identity documents, and OIG suggested that the consular officer make this the focus of his antifraud effort and work more closely with the regional security officer and local law enforcement to tackle the problem.



RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

EMBASSY LUSAKA RESOURCES AS OF MAY 18, 2005

Agency	U.S. Direct-Hire Staff	U.S. Local-Hire Staff	Foreign National Staff	Total Staff	Total Funding	
State-Diplomatic and Consular Programs	12	2	12	26	\$1,266,100	
State-ICASS	3	6	86	95	\$2,583,600	
State-Public Diplomacy	2	1	11	14	\$465,200	
State-Diplomatic Security	3	0	1	4	\$430,100	(1)
State-Marine Security Guard	6	0	4	10	\$140,293	
State-PEPFAR	0	0	2	2	\$659,519	(2)
State-Representation					\$21,000	
State-Public Diplomacy Representation					\$7,300	
State-OBO	1	0	0	1	\$480,260	
DAO	3	0	1	4	\$143,715	
DAO-PEPFAR	0	1	1	2	\$6,300,000	(3)
CDC	1	1	10	12	\$4,356,459	(2)
Treasury	2	0	0	2	\$1,500,000	(3)(4)
Peace Corps	3	0	2	5	\$2,342,000	(5)
Peace Corps-PEPFAR					\$1,023,000	
USAID - OE	14	0	79	93	\$2,670,000	
USAID - Program					\$29,217,645	
USAID - PEPFAR					\$58,450,000	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>\$112,056,191</b>	

- (1) ICASS LGP under State-ICASS.
- (2) Amount allotted to post to date.
- (3) Estimated budget.
- (4) Joint funding from Treasury and USAID.
- (5) Peace Corps has additional locally engaged staff, whose number averages 46 and fluctuates during the year.

## MANAGEMENT OPERATIONS

The management section has limited resources but provides a high level of service. The OIG workplace and quality of life questionnaire scores rate the section above average. In interviews, American staff expressed satisfaction with administrative services, and American direct-hire staff said administrative services are customer service-oriented and the level of service is very satisfactory. The management officer combines strong leadership and management skills and has worked tirelessly with OBO to find a site for the NEC. State section chiefs and heads of other agencies said the management officer could always be counted on to get the job done. The management officer and USAID executive officer have proposed implementing a joint administrative support section, an initiative that would be on the cutting edge of Department-USAID cooperation. The management officer is respected by all agencies at the mission and has the experience to carry out such an ambitious and critical project.

Under the supervision of the management officer, the general services officer and financial management officer (FMO) have improved FSN accountability and administrative services. The management officer also has the responsibility for human resources (HR). Combining these roles is problematic in a growing post that receives limited regional and temporary-duty (TDY) support. Sporadic TDY assistance and quarterly regional visits generally cannot sufficiently support a growing mission. (b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)

## HUMAN RESOURCE OFFICE

OIG found that the HR office needs improvement urgently. The management officer receives only intermittent support from the regional HR officer in Harare, supplemented by occasional TDY support from Washington. A long-serving FSN HR assistant recently left her job. Because no supervisor has been dedicated to provide full-time HR services, there is a considerable HR backlog. This is largely arises because the management officer must address other pressing management priorities, including advancing the NEC, putting the management of FSN programs at a disadvantage.

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**Recommendation 4:** Embassy Lusaka should request as a priority, and the Bureau of African Affairs or the Bureau of Human Resources should provide, a human resources officer position at Embassy Lusaka. (Action: Embassy Lusaka, in coordination with AF/EX and M/DGHR)

**Recommendation 5:** Until a permanent human resources (HR) officer can be assigned, Embassy Lusaka should request, and the Bureau of African Affairs should provide continuous, temporary-duty HR assistance to enable Embassy Lusaka to eliminate the considerable backlog of HR issues, such as the FY 2005 compensation plan and implementing computer-aided job evaluations. (Action: Embassy Lusaka, in coordination with AF/EX)





**Recommendation 10:** The Embassy Lusaka should establish current service standards that have been approved by the International Cooperative Administrative Support Services council. (Action: Embassy Lusaka)

## JOINT ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT OPERATIONS

The Department and USAID believe eliminating duplication of administrative services is a priority. For action on a NEC to move forward, OBO requires that M/R concur that an embassy has been right-sized. At this post, the management officer and USAID have met repeatedly to determine the issues that must be resolved to consolidate the functions of warehouse, housing and leasing, property management and administrative supply, customs and shipping, financial services, facilities maintenance, and procurement. To consolidate the mission portfolio, the GSO is awaiting information from USAID, so that it may enter USAID leases into the Department's Real Property Application (RPA). OIG informally recommended that the mission finalize the sizing of USAID properties and input the data to the RPA.

Consolidating the warehouse is critical because the NEC will only include one warehouse, and Department and USAID management is being proactive and positive on this matter. However, both entities must make difficult decisions involving staffing, funding, and space for joint service operations to be effective. The USAID and Department warehouses could be consolidated now, but, whenever USAID's warehouse management moves under ICASS with the Department as a service provider, there are usually higher costs due to the overhead of American officers that is included in the ICASS distribution of costs. As a result, the costs that individual agencies bear under ICASS for warehousing could increase, even though the overall cost to the U.S. government for warehousing will decrease. In addition, to ensure that costs of American staff are not overstated, OIG suggests that the post reevaluate the distribution of time under ICASS for the American officers.

**Recommendation 11:** Embassy Lusaka should consolidate all agency warehouses into a single unit. (Action: Embassy Lusaka)



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### Workload Management

The IMO has no method for managing customers' calls and prioritizing the work of the IT staff. OIG informally recommended that the office implement the Department's Universal Trouble Ticket system to manage and prioritize the workload. The IMO will contact the appropriate office in the Bureau of Information Resource Management (IRM) to implement the ticket system at the embassy.

### Diplomatic Pouch

Employees of the (b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6) are using the diplomatic pouch to receive personal mail, in violation of 5 FAM 343. There are no procedures at the embassy that prohibit this, however.

**Recommendation 12:** Embassy Lusaka should establish and implement procedures to prevent employees of the (b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6) from making personal use of the diplomatic pouch. (Action: Embassy Lusaka)

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and take charge of the school, although this has never been done. The majority of teachers are American, but the faculty also includes citizens of the United Kingdom, Australia, and southern African nations. Grants from the Office of Overseas Schools have totaled more than \$80,000 in each of the last two years. The regional security officer has directed the school towards effective use of the funds for security upgrades received under phases I and II of the Soft Target initiative.

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## EMPLOYEE ASSOCIATION

The American Mission Community Association is well run and profitable. Its management team has been at post for several years and understands mission needs. Management monitors the needs of the post's staff to review slow-moving inventory items in the commissary and identify products preferred by mission personnel. Annual audits have been completed and no discrepancies were found. The audits generally report a financially stable and healthy fund balance.

## HEALTH UNIT OPERATIONS

Management of the health unit received high marks on OIG questionnaires. The unit is adequately staffed with a nurse and a receptionist who see about 100 people each month, other than those receiving vaccinations. At the direction of the Office of Medical Services, the medical unit recently stopped providing services to USAID contractors and others not authorized to use the unit. Medical services are limited in Lusaka, but there is a clinic that can handle most embassy patients until the regional medical officer (RMO) approves a medical evacuation, if necessary. Adequate routine dental care is also available. The embassy averages three to four medical evacuations per year. Most are sent to Pretoria for tests not available in Zambia, for childbirth, or to obtain a second opinion on a local diagnosis. The nurse said the RMO and the Office of Medical Services provide all appropriate support. The RMO visits four times each year.

The nurse keeps sufficient medical supplies on hand and maintains all required controls and records. Medicines are not kept beyond their expiration dates. The Health and Medical Information Report is current and complete. The nurse provides first aid training and, through the weekly embassy newsletter, keeps the embassy community informed of the latest medical and health advice. She monitors closely the sanitation of the embassy cafeteria. She is active on the emergency action committee and participated in a recent crisis management exercise.

Since 2002, the embassy has made anti-retroviral therapy available free to embassy FSNs and their spouses who are infected with HIV/AIDS. The therapy is offered at three local clinics where privacy is protected. Although the health unit does not administer the program, the embassy is educating staff about the program.







## GENERAL SERVICES OPERATIONS

The embassy has made progress in all areas identified as needing improvement. The post has an accurate RPA database, where lease files are accurately recorded for most housing. The RPA will be complete once USAID provides housing data. OIG's random review of short- and long-term residential property found the RPA data was accurate.

The embassy has reviewed unauthorized commitments of under \$1,000 and identified no major fraud. The embassy initially believed there was a non-expendable property shortage of over \$600,000, or 20 percent, but later determined the shortage was attributable only to missing paperwork. The GSO has the appropriate controls over non-expendable property. The annual inventory for FY 2005 was within the one-percent required level of discrepancy.

The mission's newly hired motor pool dispatcher will improve the efficiency of operations. Credit cards are not widely used in Zambia; therefore the general services officer and the procurement specialist use their post-issued cards primarily to order from the Internet. OIG informally recommended that the post review its procedures for using blanket purchase agreements to ensure that these agreements are an effective purchasing mechanism and not another form of purchase order. In addition, there appears to be an imbalance of electrical loads on the power grid serving the GSO complex, which is causing individual electrical phases to drop out. As a result, there is insufficient power to sustain operations for the many GSO computer-driven programs, reducing the efficiency of GSO systems and the office's productivity. OIG informally recommended that the post review and remedy the internal GSO power-distribution grid.

## FINANCIAL SERVICES

The embassy knows its must strengthen internal controls in the finance office and the ICASS program. Before the assignment of the current first-tour FMO, the embassy had no American FMO. The FMO, working closely with the management officer, has improved financial controls in a number of areas. The office now regularly reviews unliquidated obligations, has implemented blanket purchase agreements, and checks all vouchers to ensure that partial shipments are clearly identified to avoid duplicate payments. The FMO is developing written policies and procedures on all financial operations.

The FMO performs unannounced cash verifications monthly for the Class B cashier, preventing manipulation of funds. OIG observed the FMO's performance of an unannounced cash-verification. After incidents involving Citibank check fraud occurred, the embassy cashier began cashing checks for local currency only. Now, the FMO must approve disbursements needed in U.S. dollars.

## CONSULAR SECTION

In April 2005, the regional consular officer corrected several inventory control deficiencies in the consular section. OIG found only one remaining management control shortcoming. The backup consular officer is neither performing a weekly reconciliation of machine-readable visa foils nor is that officer conducting other periodic reviews of consular accountable records, despite the requirements stated in 02 STATE 147564.

**Recommendation 15:** Embassy Lusaka should have the designated backup accountable consular officer weekly reconcile machine-readable visa foils against the approved OF-156 applications and periodically review the accountable consular officer's other accountable records. (Action: Embassy Lusaka.)







## INFORMAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Informal recommendations cover operational matters not requiring action by organizations outside the inspected unit and/or the parent regional bureau and are not 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.

### Executive Direction

#### Entry-Level Program

The embassy has few entry-level personnel and no formal entry-level program. The DCM is readily accessible to all entry-level staff, however, and has provided effective career mentoring when asked. There is, however, room for greater clarity and focus to an entry-level program.

**Informal Recommendation 1:** Embassy Lusaka should formalize a mentoring program for entry-level personnel that at least includes regular meetings between these employees and the deputy chief of mission and activities that will help them gain experience beyond their formal work requirements. (Action: Embassy Lusaka)

### Policy and Program Implementation

#### Mission Performance Plan

The MPP's strategies and tactics do not entirely involve each agency and section's contributions. In particular, public affairs and public diplomacy tactics are not prioritized or well integrated into individual goal papers.

**Informal Recommendation 2:** Embassy Lusaka should revise its mission performance plan to reflect more completely the contributions of each section and agency, particularly public affairs and public diplomacy priorities. (Action: Embassy Lusaka)



## Political and Economic Affairs

The performance evaluation for the political assistant has been more than six months late for the past two years.

**Informal Recommendation 3:** Embassy Lusaka should ensure that the political/economic section establishes and implements a system to ensure that employee evaluations are completed and submitted on time. (Action: Embassy Lusaka)

## Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs

The PAS has not submitted an annual influence analysis report for at least two years.

**Informal Recommendation 4:** Embassy Lusaka should ensure that the public affairs section submits an annual influence report to the Department by the end of fiscal year 2005. (Action: Embassy Lusaka)

PAS programming and IRC outreach efforts are not reaching as many women and Muslims as they could.

**Informal Recommendation 5:** Embassy Lusaka should ensure that the public affairs section and other mission elements work closely to expand and deepen mission outreach to women and Muslims, including by using exchange program alumni. (Action: Embassy Lusaka)

The PAO and the public diplomacy officer do not meet regularly to confer on programming strategies or coordinate section management.

**Informal Recommendation 6:** Embassy Lusaka should ensure that the public affairs officer and public diplomacy officer meet at least twice weekly to discuss programming options and review workloads and staff performance. (Action: Embassy Lusaka)

Management of the PAS workload is complicated by frequent FSN absences stemming from chronic illness or these employees' need to attend to family needs and funerals connected with Zambia's high HIV/AIDS rate.

**Informal Recommendation 7:** Embassy Lusaka should ensure that public affairs section units hold regular meetings to review activities and workloads and that public affairs staff are sufficiently cross trained to be able to back each other up effectively. (Action: Embassy Lusaka)

The embassy has made great strides in improving procurement, but the PAS still has problems with some of its routine supplies and complicated, section-specific procurements.

**Informal Recommendation 8:** Embassy Lusaka should ensure that the public affairs section and the general services office collaborate to identify ways to work more effectively together. (Action: Embassy Lusaka)

## Consular Operations

The consular section and PAS have developed a media schedule for educational outreach. They should expand this to include dissemination of other consular information of public interest, such as warnings about visa fraud and explanations of consular procedures.

**Informal Recommendation 9:** Embassy Lusaka should schedule monthly meetings between the consular and public affairs section chiefs to plan dissemination of consular information through the local media. (Action: Embassy Lusaka.)

Although the embassy's duty book requires the duty officer to handle all but the most complicated after-hours consular cases, routine consular cases are too frequently referred to the consular officer.

**Informal Recommendation 10:** Embassy Lusaka should see that all embassy officers on the duty roster follow embassy duty policies, including handling most after-hours consular cases. (Action: Embassy Lusaka.)

The consular officer is concerned about vulnerabilities in the processing of family members who are following to join asylum seekers or refugees who have been admitted to the United States (Visas 92 and 93 cases). The officer has found several cases of identity and family relationship fraud and has difficulty in verifying applicants' documents coming from outside Zambia.

**Informal Recommendation 11:** Embassy Lusaka should send a reporting cable to the Department detailing concerns over the frequent fraud encountered in processing visas for family members of asylum seekers and refugees. (Action: Embassy Lusaka.)

## Resource Management

The embassy's RPA system does not include all of the embassy's housing data; USAID's housing measurements need to be added.

**Informal Recommendation 12:** Embassy Lusaka should coordinate with the U.S. Agency for International Development to ensure that housing measurements are correct and entered in the real property application system. (Action: Embassy Lusaka.)

The embassy's financial management office is not using blanket purchase agreements in a way that would reduce purchase orders and control costs.

**Informal Recommendation 13:** Embassy Lusaka should develop a policy and procedure to use blanket purchase agreements to reduce purchase orders and control costs. (Action: Embassy Lusaka.)

An imbalance in electrical loads on the power grid for the GSO complex causes individual electrical phases to drop out, leaving too little power to sustain many computer-driven programs.

**Informal Recommendation 14:** Embassy Lusaka should review its internal power grid for the general services operation complex to ensure that the complex receives consistent power. (Action: Embassy Lusaka.)

Safe driving awards from FY 2004 have been completed, but have not been finalized.

**Informal Recommendation 15:** Embassy Lusaka should review and award the safe driving awards from last year. (Action: Embassy Lusaka.)

The embassy has no written policy identifying which FSNs must be provided with a uniform.

**Informal Recommendation 16:** Embassy Lusaka should direct the general services officer and facilities manager to identify positions that require uniforms, prepare a memo identifying the uniform contents, and order uniforms that do not exceed the allowance of \$400 per year per employee. (Action: Embassy Lusaka.)

Embassy vehicles do not have radio communication. Only the driver on duty has an embassy-provided cellular telephone.

**Informal Recommendation 17:** Embassy Lusaka should ensure that the management officer and regional security officer coordinate to provide all motor pool vehicles with radio communication. (Action: Embassy Lusaka.)

The embassy does not have a training program in which all sections identify and track training needs for direct-hire and locally employed staff.

**Informal Recommendation 18:** Embassy Lusaka should develop a training program in which all sections develop a plan to identify training needs for direct-hire employees and locally employed staff. (Action: Embassy Lusaka.)

At the time of the inspection, 15 percent of the FSNs' performance evaluations were still outstanding. Some FSNs said their evaluations were more than six months late.

**Informal Recommendation 19:** Embassy Lusaka should review the Foreign Service national annual evaluation program to develop a notification process to ensure the timely completion of evaluations. (Action: Embassy Lusaka.)

Embassy Lusaka's credit card holders in the GSO are not verifying credit card billings before the financial management office authorizes payment.

**Informal Recommendation 20:** Embassy Lusaka should develop and establish a procedure for issuing credit cards and establish procedures for users to verify billings prior to payment. (Action: Embassy Lusaka.)

### *Information Management*

The IT contingency plan has not been integrated into the embassy's emergency action plan, despite the requirements of 12 FAM 622.3-2 and 632.3-2.

**Informal Recommendation 21:** Embassy Lusaka should ensure that the information technology contingency plan is fully integrated into the emergency action plan. (Action: Embassy Lusaka.)

Position descriptions for locally employed computer staff do not include statements regarding the employees' information systems security responsibilities.

**Informal Recommendation 22:** Embassy Lusaka should include a statement regarding information systems security in the position descriptions of all local employed computer staff. (Action: Embassy Lusaka.)

The information management office does not have a system to prioritize and manage customer requests.

**Informal Recommendation 23:** Embassy Lusaka should implement a tracking application, such as the Department's Universal Trouble Ticket, to manage and prioritize customer requests. (Action: Embassy Lusaka.)

PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Arrival Date</b>
Ambassador	Martin G. Brennan	11/02
Deputy Chief of Mission	Andrew Passen	08/04

**Chiefs of Sections:**

Administrative	Thaddeus Plosser	09/03
Consular	Joshua Fischel	08/04
Political and Economic	Katherine Dhanani	08/02
Public Affairs	Dehab Ghebreab	08/04
Regional Security	Frank DeMichele	09/04

**Other Agencies:**

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	Dr. Marc Bulterys	08/04
Department of Defense	Lt. Col. Leslie Bryant	10/02
U.S. Agency for International Development	James Bednar	08/04
Peace Corps	David Morris	08/03



## ABBREVIATIONS

AF	Bureau of African Affairs
AIS	American International School
AERA	American Embassy Recreation Association
AIDS	Acquired immune deficiency syndrome
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
DAO	Defense attaché office
DCM	Deputy chief of mission
DS	Bureau of Diplomatic Security
EFM	Eligible family member
FMO	Financial management officer
FMS	Facilities maintenance specialist
FSI	Foreign Service Institute
FSN	Foreign Service national
GSO	General services office
HR	Bureau of Human Resources
ICASS	International Cooperative Administrative Support Services
IMO	Information management office(r)
IMS	Information management specialist
IRC	Information resource center
ISSO	Information systems security office(r)
IT	Information technology
LES	Locally employed staff



MPP	Mission Performance Plan
M/R	Office of Rightsizing
NEC	New embassy compound
OBO	Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations
OIG	Office of Inspector General
OTA	Treasury Department's Office of Technical Assistance
PAO	Public affairs officer
PAS	Public affairs section
Pol/econ	Political/economic section
PEPFAR	President Bush's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
RMO	Regional medical officer
RPA	Real Property Application
S/GAC	Office of the Global AIDS Coordinator
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development

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