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

Report of Inspection

Embassy N'Djamena,
Chad

Report Number ISP-I-09-02A, December 2008

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PURPOSE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY OF THE INSPECTION

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

PURPOSE

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

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

METHODOLOGY

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



**United States Department of State
and the Broadcasting Board of Governors**

Office of Inspector General

PREFACE

This report was prepared by the Office of Inspector General (OIG) pursuant to the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, and Section 209 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980, as amended. It is one of a series of audit, inspection, investigative, and special reports prepared by OIG periodically as part of its responsibility to promote effective management, accountability and positive change in the Department of State and the Broadcasting Board of Governors.

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

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

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "H. W. Geisel".

Harold W. Geisel
Acting Inspector General

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KEY JUDGMENTS

- Past inspection reports highlighted issues regarding staffing and management at Embassy N'Djamena. Many of those issues are still valid today.
- In order to make this post and others like it function even minimally, the Department of State (Department) and the Bureau of African Affairs (AF) must take a hard look at human and financial resources and make fundamental decisions about the value of maintaining posts such as this one which cannot be adequately staffed, protected, or funded.
- Embassy N'Djamena continues to be a “historically difficult-to-fill” post,¹ and six out of eight key positions were filled by first-tour officers, temporary duty (TDY) personnel, or were vacant at the time of inspection. Long gaps due to curtailments and the difficulties of staffing the embassy result in post experiencing a series of TDY stopgaps or vacancies in key positions.
- Adequate mentoring and development of first-tour officers is difficult if not impossible when there are not enough experienced, permanent officers at post.
- The potential for a repeat of major unrest, coupled with the trauma of the February evacuation, the looting and destruction of embassy housing, the brief June temporary relocation of most mission American staff to Cameroon, as well as the overall threat environment, continue to have a significant negative impact on the morale of those serving in Chad.
- Post needs to build a core group of competent locally employed (LE) staff. Training, including training out of country, and mentoring of these LE staff by experienced American officers is critical to successful development of this core LE staff cadre.

¹“Historically difficult-to-staff” posts are those where more than 50 percent of vacancies receive no more than three bids on assignments for three out of four years.

- Significant weaknesses in human resources (HR), financial management, and general services exist and were compounded by the upheaval in staffing due to the February evacuation. Embassy corrective action plans are a critical base on which to build provision of appropriate administrative services but must be followed and tracked by senior management to develop consistent standards of service.

The inspection took place in Washington, DC, between June 2 and July 8, and in N'Djamena, Chad, between July 10 and 24, 2008. Ambassador Marisa R. Lino (team leader), Ralph Kwong (deputy team leader), Katherine Schultz, Christopher Mack, and Andrew Kotval conducted the inspection. A classified annex to this report has been issued.

CONTEXT

In February 2008, armed rebel groups launched a coordinated attack from the east on the capital, N'Djamena, aimed at overthrowing the Government of Chad.



They came close to achieving regime change in two days of fierce fighting in the capital — much of it dangerously near the embassy compound and embassy housing. The post experienced the complete looting and destruction of six embassy residences and other material damage to the chancery and Ambassador's residence — including a rocket propelled grenade round penetrating the wall of the executive offices and landing in an internal hallway. These events triggered the emergency evacuation of the entire Embassy, most of the expatriate community, and the permanent closure of the American school.

Chad is a hard-to-fill, 30 percent hardship differential and 25 percent danger pay post with two rest and recuperation trips during a two-year tour. N'Djamena is a primitive capital with few paved roads. The rest of what passes for roads are dusty in the dry season and mud pits during the rainy season, with huge potholes and dangerous drainage canals. Electricity frequently fails. Water is unreliable, and what water there is, is not potable.

The Embassy is staffed by 29 direct-hire Americans when fully staffed (which has not been the case since the February events) and approximately 450 LE employees (including the direct-hire local guard force). The Department, the Defense attaché office, and a U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) contractor comprise the mission. The Peace Corps program, once a strong one, was suspended indefinitely in April 2006 due to political upheaval at the time. Post budget is approximately \$11 million annually. In FY 2007 economic and humanitarian assistance totaled just over \$108 million, with over 86 percent going to refugee relief.

Chad is a landlocked country bordered by Libya to the north, Sudan to the east, the Central African Republic to the south, Cameroon and Nigeria to the southwest, and Niger to the west. The country is divided into three major geographical regions: a desert zone in the north, an arid Sahelian belt in the center where the capital is located, and a more fertile savannah zone in the south. Chad is home to over 200 different ethnic and linguistic groups. Arabic and French are the official languages. Islam is the most widely practiced religion, although Christianity and traditional African beliefs coexist peacefully with it.

Since independence from French colonial rule in 1960, Chad's history has been characterized by chronic political instability; frequent political violence and civil wars; an absence of respect for human rights, good governance and democratic political norms; and a lack of endeavor towards sustainable economic and social development.

Since 2000, three new developments have affected Chad significantly: the Darfur crisis, in the form of nearly 250,000 Sudanese and Central African refugees on Chadian soil, as well as nearly 150,000 internally displaced persons; Chad's participation as a partner of the United States in the global counterterrorism effort; and the beginning of major petroleum production in Chad. U.S. oil companies are engaged in petroleum production in the south of the country. Nevertheless, Chad is one of the poorest countries in the world; most Chadians live in poverty as subsistence herders and farmers. Since 2003, crude oil has become the country's primary source of export earnings, superseding the traditional cotton industry.

U.S. strategic goals are: addressing the humanitarian emergency resulting from the Darfur crisis and reinforcing regional security in order to resolve that crisis; promoting a more legitimate polity by implementing an electoral reform process to ensure credible democratic elections in 2009 and 2011; countering terrorism and religious extremism; and promoting sustainable economic development through responsible management of revenues from Chad's petroleum resources. The Embassy addresses all four strategic goals effectively within the limits of the current circumstances.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTION

OVERVIEW

The Ambassador arrived at post in early December 2007. The rebel attacks on the capital and post evacuation happened approximately two months later. All embassy American staff left the post with little forewarning, and the Ambassador and three officers worked from the French base at the airport for several days while the evacuation of American citizens continued. Various individuals in Washington and at post praised the Ambassador for his calm, collected, and rational approach to the massive crisis he faced so early in his tenure. The core group returned to post in mid-February once the rebels had been repulsed from the capital by the Chadian Government and the Embassy had been declared secure by the Bureau of Diplomatic Security (DS). Ordered departure status was lifted at the beginning of May.

The former deputy chief of mission (DCM) finished her tour of duty and departed post in mid-May. A TDY officer was acting DCM during the period of this inspection. This TDY officer, a management officer with extensive experience in Africa, is making a major effort to cope with numerous management shortfalls at post.

Survival and reestablishment of normality have been the primary objectives of this Embassy since February, but the brief relocation in June by land to Cameroon of most American staff once again completely interrupted the normal functioning of the post. The Ambassador, the acting DCM, and the regional security officer (RSO) receive high marks for having studied the events of February and, having drawn some important lessons learned from the experience, having applied them to the circumstances surrounding the departure in June. At that time, the Ambassador undertook to move the bulk of his staff and adult family members to Cameroon on extremely short notice when it appeared the rebels might be heading back to the capital. He had verbal permission from Washington to proceed, but afterwards some in Washington were unhappy with that less formal procedure. However, the Office of Inspector General (OIG) inspection team does not question the Ambassador's

judgment in taking action to safeguard the lives of the Americans at post. In addition, because the quick overland move cost very little (compared to evacuation by air — the entire two nights in Cameroon cost the post less than one air ticket to Paris), Department management is now examining this type of option for other posts in similar circumstances.

Executive direction of this post now faces the high likelihood of renewed political upheaval when the next dry season arrives (October), and together with the general threat environment,² this hangs over the post like the sword of Damocles. Everyone at post feels this acutely, whether they lost all their worldly possessions due to looting in February or not. The trauma of the evacuation and the potential for another such event in the fall is a fundamental factor for the executive direction here.

In most embassies, the responsibility for ensuring junior officers are mentored and given challenges to appropriately develop their skills falls on the DCM. In Chad, the entire front office is faced with mentoring many of the key officers because of a dearth of experienced Americans at post. The burden of running an embassy while simultaneously closely monitoring two-thirds of the American staff is not a fair burden to place on an Ambassador and a DCM in the difficult environment of N'Djamena.

Considering the continuing history of upheaval in Chad, and taking into account the most recent history of evacuation at this post, the difficulties in staffing, managing and, above all, protecting the lives of the Americans here, this inspection team has pondered the value of maintaining the profile of this Embassy at its current level, even though the team is not equipped to look beyond the immediate issues of this mission. There are examples of slimmed down versions of embassies in the neighborhood. The Department had a Special Embassy Program in the past for some of the same reasons. The Department and AF need to take a hard look at human and financial resources with respect to Embassy N'Djamena and reach their own conclusions about the value of maintaining posts such as this one which cannot be adequately staffed, protected, or funded.

²See also the classified annex.

U.S. GOVERNMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES AND THE MISSION STRATEGIC PLAN PROCESS

The number one strategic goal for the United States in Chad is deepening and expanding the cooperation on counterterrorism, focused primarily through the interagency Trans-Sahel Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP). Chad has also been the recipient of antiterrorism assistance for its police forces, a program run through DS. The TSCTP has brought to Chad the extensive presence of Special Operations Command Europe (SOCEUR) forces to provide humanitarian assistance, community projects, information programs, and joint military exercises. The relationship with the European Command (EUCOM) is dealt with in a separate section of this report.

The second most important goal for the U.S. Government is humanitarian assistance to refugees and internally displaced persons in eastern Chad due to the Darfur crisis. The permanent transfer of a Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration officer as refugee coordinator to Chad, which occurred during the course of the inspection, will assist the Embassy considerably in furthering U.S. objectives as a major donor in humanitarian relief efforts.

Additional U.S. Government goals include promoting a peaceful and democratic political transition, furthering economic growth, and protecting American commercial interests in the petroleum sector. Post has requested reinstating an economic commercial officer position abolished in 2007, and again providing expert assistance to Chad's oil revenue management oversight body as a complement to the assistance of the European Union and the World Bank. These requests are also discussed in separate sections of this report.

The mission strategic process was handled in an unusual way at post, because of the February evacuation. The core embassy group prepared the document, and some officers who were evacuated were able to contribute to it from either Yaoundé or Washington. However, the mission as a whole was able, one way or another, to participate actively in the process.

COUNTRY TEAM

The country team includes the Departments of State and Defense. The four-person Defense attaché office is a very busy and productive office that works closely with the Special Operations Command and Control Element from SOCEUR, part of EUCOM. Interagency relations at post are excellent at all levels. There has been a

USAID contractor at post, but that position is now being replaced by a U.S. personal services contractor in the process of being hired by USAID Washington.

POST RELATIONSHIP WITH THE EUROPEAN COMMAND

The presence of EUCOM/SOCEUR personnel in Chad over the last two years has been helpful to the Embassy in achieving U.S. Government goals and objectives. At the same time, its presence has placed a significant burden on a management office not as capable of handling the burden as it should have been. However, the Ambassador's efforts to reach a workable solution directly with the EUCOM combatant commander (COCOM) represent an eminently sensible, practical way forward. Shortly after his arrival in January, the Ambassador requested a "strategic pause" in order to evaluate the situation, a pause which was understood and accepted by all parties. Due to the ordered departure in February, all country clearances, as is normally the case with evacuated posts, were then evaluated and granted by the geographical bureau in the Department, in this case by AF. However, once ordered departure status was lifted on May 2, AF conveyed a verbal order to post instructing the Embassy to continue seeking approval for any country clearance requests from Department of Defense (DOD) personnel from AF's front office. All SOCEUR country clearance requests have been denied by AF.

The core principle under contention is the issue of Chief of Mission (COM) authority versus the COCOM authority. President Bush's letter to ambassadors repeats the clear-cut instruction many Presidents have used: "As Chief of Mission, you have full responsibility for the direction, coordination, and supervision of all United States Government executive branch employees in [country], regardless of their employment categories or location, except those under command of a U.S. area military commander or on the staff of an international organization. Except for the activities of the personnel exempted above, you are in charge of all executive branch activities and operations in your Mission."

The AF directive, even after post was removed from ordered departure status in April, to continue to insist on approving country clearance requests from DOD for Chad is not appropriate. To delay or interrupt useful programs in country, which the Ambassador feels contribute to mission goals and objectives, is an inefficient approach if the issue is a larger one.

Recommendation 1: The Bureau of African Affairs should cease insisting on approving country clearance on any particular subset of U.S. Government officials traveling to Chad now that ordered departure status has been removed. (Action: AF)

AF could raise the issue with Department management, if it sees the issue occurring across the Sahelian countries in its jurisdiction, for example. If this issue goes further and affects a number of posts worldwide, which the inspection team believes may possibly be the case, not only AF, but the Department as a whole should take steps to deal with the fundamental issue. There are recent signs this issue is receiving attention at the highest levels.

Under the umbrella of Operation Enduring Freedom (Trans Sahelian) and TSCTP, the work of SOCEUR personnel in Chad has included a number of projects of humanitarian assistance, community development and information dissemination, all U.S. Government activities traditionally under COM authority in a foreign country. Indeed, these SOCEUR projects in Chad have been undertaken in coordination with the COM, the public diplomacy (PD) section, and the USAID contractor at post to deconflict and avoid duplication with other agency efforts. Other SOCEUR personnel have engaged in joint exercises with the Chadian military while yet others have undertaken activities normally carried out by the Defense attaché's office, again, an office under COM authority.

The continuing presence of SOCEUR personnel (since 2006), even though the individuals assigned are rotated through the positions on four- or six-month periods of duty, makes it clear this is not a temporary change of approach but a longer-term relationship, at least in Chad. National Security Decision Directive-38 (NSDD-38) applies to all full-time, permanent, direct-hire U.S. Government executive branch employees including foreign nationals and U.S. military personnel under COM authority. A position is considered "permanent" if it is established without time limit, for a period of at least one year, or if it is encumbered for a year or more.

The significant overlap between activities carried out by elements traditionally under COM authority and SOCEUR personnel has caused friction — although not at the working level — and a blurring of the lines of authority. As a senior Office of the Secretary of Defense official said to this inspection team: "Chad is perhaps the canary in the coal mine in terms of identifying the problem of how to approach countries in peacetime...and in looking at the question of COM authority versus COCOM authority."

The Ambassador proposed to EUCOM a variety of possible solutions to the problem of supporting TSCTP “enduring presence” personnel in N’Djamena, including ways that utilized NSDD-38 authority and ways it did not. He also asked EUCOM to provide a longer-term (at least a year) plan for all the proposed additional SOCEUR presence in Chad, with justification for expected programming. At the same time, the mission would take a careful look at what the management office could and could not provide in terms of services to SOCEUR TDY personnel. However, according to the International Cooperative Administrative Support Services (ICASS) Service Center, an embassy can derive financial and material benefits substantially equal to those flowing from NSDD-38 authority, even without that authority if certain criteria are met. The assessment of management office capabilities to support SOCEUR TDYers was interrupted by the evacuation in February and has not yet been produced, but the Ambassador seemed to be moving toward a resolution of the issue with the COCOM.

The OIG inspection team believes this to be a fair compromise and a practical way forward until such time as a more comprehensive solution can be found for this issue between the Department and DOD.

Recommendation 2: Embassy N’Djamena should determine the level and type of management office support it should provide to elements of Special Operations Command Europe and, in coordination with the Bureau of African Affairs and consultation with Special Operations Command Europe, should develop and implement a plan to fulfill the support requirements. (Action: Embassy N’Djamena, in coordination with AF)

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POLICY AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

Public diplomacy is generally a bright spot at Embassy N'Djamena with a positive and capable staff eager to engage on their program. Public diplomacy resources in FY 2008 include: \$289,200 for program operations, \$111,075 in nonappropriated funds for the English teaching at the English Language School; \$90,428 for Fulbright grants (\$16,428 degree scholarships for Chadians, \$74,000 for Humphrey fellowships, no Chadian research grants, and no American lecturer grants); \$72,000 for the International Visitor Program (eight grants for visitors). There are no speakers from the Coordinator of International Information Programs, and there is \$1,480 for the speaker program from the Paris-based Africa Regional Services.

The public affairs officer (PAO) is enthusiastic and happy to be at post, but is a first-tour Civil Service excursionist, and like many officers at this post, lacking in experience. There is no experienced PD officer at post. While the PAO had the opportunity to attend all the recommended Foreign Service Institute (FSI) training courses prior to arrival at post, there is no substitute for on-the-ground experience. This is particularly the case because of the extremely difficult working environment. To give one example, Chad does not boast an experienced press corps and one of the goals of the mission is to work to improve the basic skill set of the media. The inspection team observed a training course focused on language skills for a select group of journalists and spoke to them about the inspection process. However, it is evident much more needs to be done in terms of improving Chadian media skills, some of which is being done under democracy and development (USAID) funding.

The LE staff is well qualified, dedicated, and program-oriented; the most senior LE staff member in the PD section received much praise from the appropriate offices in Washington for his responsiveness, capabilities, and work ethic. One office in the Department praised the section for the high quality of its International Visitor Program nominees and noted the outreach being done, security permitting, in different parts of the country by the PAO and/or his LE staff member traveling to speak at universities and schools, handing out books, etc.

Key for the PD section at this mission is to ensure it puts PD priorities in line with overall mission goals and objectives. The Ambassador has taken on the mentoring of the PAO and is guiding him on post priorities, a positive development.

The information resource center and library collection were closed to the public during the inspection, due to specific security concerns. The situation will be reexamined August 1, 2008. If security concerns preclude reopening the center and library in its current location, the Embassy has already been exploring alternatives.

TRADE PROMOTION

There is one Department LE staff position dedicated to economic and commercial functions, but the position is currently vacant, the incumbent having taken a job with the World Bank. The mission is in the process of hiring a replacement. The incumbent had organized trade missions to the United States in the past. The Department of Commerce has been approached by the African Command to place a certain number of positions within its structures.

ADVOCACY AND REPORTING

One officer, the political/economic officer, has primary advocacy and reporting responsibilities. The reporting responsibilities are of course shared in part by the Ambassador and acting DCM. The political/economic officer is a first-tour officer and was close to the end of her tour of duty at the time of the inspection.

While the Embassy has been able to fill mandated reporting requirements on time as well as providing regular reports on the political and economic situation, the Washington community expressed a desire for more reporting and analysis from post, particularly on economic issues.

The Embassy formerly had an economic officer slot, but it was terminated in 2007. Post has requested the reinstatement of that position, and many in the Washington community, including AF, would support such a decision when sufficient positions become available to cover Chad's ranking on the priority list for new positions. Post has also requested reinstating an expert to provide assistance to Chad's oil revenue management oversight body as a complement to the assistance of the

European Union and the World Bank. Notwithstanding the probable value added of these positions, any decision to fill them also should consider the overall operational difficulties facing the post and the marginal effectiveness of what likely will be additional inexperienced first-tour officers.

Noting the workload in the consular section, and that the consular officer position used to be dual-hatted (consular and economic), it seems possible to give the incoming consular officer some economic reporting projects as duties permit. The inspection team is not suggesting dual-hatting the consular position again, but believes post could help develop the incoming officer (who will also be a first-tour officer) by giving the officer some economic reporting projects.

Embassy N'Djamena has initiated a program of regional collaboration with neighboring posts that is worthy of note and emulation. Its reporting officer exchange program with Embassies Tripoli and Khartoum achieves the multiple outcomes of improving the reporting on issues of regional importance, contributing to the professional development of officers, and fostering cooperation between posts in different geographical bureaus.

Best Practice: Reporting Officer Exchange Program

Issue: Regional issues transcend the borders of neighboring posts, in this case Embassies N'Djamena, Khartoum, and Tripoli. Reporting officers at each post gain a bilateral perspective from interactions with their respective host nation government contacts and other everyday activities. However, it would be helpful to develop broader perspective and depth of knowledge, which could lead to better contextual reporting and analysis.

Response: The Ambassador has initiated a process with nearby posts, where political officers from Embassy Khartoum and Embassy Tripoli travel to Embassy N'Djamena for a week of working in Chad on issues relating to the regional conflict.

Result: This exchange, which functions among posts belonging to different Departmental bureaus (NEA and AF), aids U.S. Government goals and objectives by giving reporting officers perspective and depth of knowledge. It fosters collaboration between posts and geographical bureaus on issues of regional importance, the synergies of which could bear results by drawing upon the combined talents and viewpoints of a more varied pool of officers.

CONSULAR AFFAIRS

Consular operations in Chad have been reduced to providing American citizens services. All visa services have been suspended indefinitely.

The full time, FS-03 consular officer position in N'Djamena was created in early 2006. A series of Civil Service excursionists and Foreign Service officers on short periods of temporary duty have intermittently staffed the position. The sole consular LE staff member has seen 14 different consular officers assigned to the section over the last two years. The political/economic officer — a Civil Service excursionist — has a consular title, and has served as a backup consular officer between TDY assistance. A full-time, permanent consular officer is not expected to arrive until October 2008, and the political/economic officer serving as backup will depart post in December 2008; her replacement is not scheduled to arrive until February 2009. The newly arrived refugee coordinator has prior consular experience and could also potentially serve as a back-up consular officer.

Recommendation 3: Embassy N'Djamena, in coordination with the Bureau of Consular Affairs and the Bureau of Human Resources, should work to ensure that any officer assigned to N'Djamena with the requisite training or recent consular experience receives a consular title and serves as a back-up consular officer. In the absence of qualified officers, post should have incoming officers take the requisite consular training prior to arriving at post post. (Action: Embassy N'Djamena, in coordination with CA and DGHR)

There has been a recurrent problem of staffing the consular position with inexperienced officers who, although well versed in day-to-day consular operations, are not familiar with the management controls and the accountable items software.

Recommendation 4: Embassy N'Djamena should ensure any temporary duty consular officers and the future permanently assigned consular officer, in addition to the basic consular training course, complete the specific training named in the "Model Letter of Designation for Accountable Consular Officer for Fees" prior to assuming the role of post's consular section chief. (Action: Embassy N'Djamena)

confirm employment and alert posts abroad to upcoming applications. Workload implications for these posts are minimal. Even prior to the suspension of visa services, the consular section had a modest nonimmigrant visa workload (about 1,500 applications in FY 2007 with an adjusted refusal rate of 37 percent). N'Djamena has never processed immigrant visas; all immigrant visas for Chadians are processed in Cameroon.

The written designation of the accountable consular officer (ACO) is not current. The political/economic officer is currently named as the backup ACO, and the OIG team recommends she maintain this role until her departure in December 2008. Although the consular officer position is intermittently staffed by TDY officers, the OIG team believes the only sitting consular officer (i.e., either TDY or permanent) should be the designated ACO. The political/economic officer as back-up consular officer is physically removed from the consular section, cannot appropriately monitor activities, and has taken only the minimum training in consular operations in order to receive her commission.

Recommendation 5: Embassy N'Djamena should designate, in writing, the consular officer as the primary accountable consular officer and his/her back-up as the alternate accountable consular officer. (Action: Embassy N'Djamena)

Because nonimmigrant visa services are suspended, there is very infrequent consular cashiering activity. Consular section financial accounting files are not kept in accordance with 7 FAH-1 H-743.4 and 743.5, respectively. The files are not in order, incomplete, and in some cases missing.

Recommendation 6: Embassy N'Djamena should create chronological daily and monthly financial accounting files in accordance with Department regulations. (Action: Embassy N'Djamena)

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RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Effective July 16, 2008

AGENCY	US Direct-Hire Staff	US Local-Hire Staff	Foreign National Staff	Total Staff	Total Funding FY2009
State – D&CP	12	1	9	22	\$1,342,200
State – ICASS	4	2	214(*)	220	4,730,400
State – Public Diplomacy	1		8	9	261,400
State – English Language Program			11	11	130,300
State – Diplomatic Security	1		160(**)	161	1,420,200
State – MSG	6		3	9	207,900
State – Representation				0	21,100
State – OBO (Regular)	1			1	664,814
State – Refugee Coordinator (new)	1			1	180,000
AID – Development Assistance	1			1	50,000
AID – International Disaster Assist.	1			1	194,900
DSCA – Defense Sec. Coop Agency			1	1	15,000
DIA - Defense Attaché Office	4		1	5	269,250
DOD – Defense JCPT (***)	12		1	13	1,261,600
DOD – Defense EUCOM (left) (****)					192,400
	44	3	408	455	\$10,941,464

(*) 116 - Traditional bureau
98 - ICASS Guards

(***) JCPT - Joint Contact Team Program
5 permanent positions & up to 7 TDYers

(**) 144 - Guards Residential, Patrol
16 - Surveillance Detection

(****) EUCOM - US European Command

OVERVIEW

The recurring theme of virtually every report on Embassy N'Djamena is that it is a difficult post due to its isolation and lack of infrastructure to support even a minimum quality of life. AF and the Embassy, in the opinion of the OIG team, have done everything except to direct assignments (which is out of their control) to recruit experienced officers who will remain for a full tour and can develop quality LE staff.

Staffing gaps are the norm rather than the exception. The lack of experienced officers and curtailments make continuity in management services impossible. TDY officers — some remaining several months to cover staffing gaps and provide training — keep the post afloat but in the end represent only a band-aid approach to the longer term problem of providing sustainable stability to the Embassy.

Post is now a two-year, two rest and recuperation, adult-family-member-only post with a 30 percent differential, 25 percent danger pay, and 60 percent cost of living allowance. This combination may provide incentives to recruit staff that can cope with day-to-day living and survival but will not necessarily recruit the experienced officers this Embassy needs.

The benefits of serving in Iraq or Afghanistan are in the linked assignments to more desirable postings and the perception that such postings are career enhancing. Chad is not seen in the same light, yet the difficulties encountered in serving at this post are in the same ballpark. A prior OIG inspection report in 2004 recommended that AF use every possible incentive to attract good staff but without some type of recognition package from the Department chronic staffing issues likely will continue to plague post. The OIG team recommends some serious attention be given to developing a package of incentives and/or a program that will result in appropriate staff bidding on this post and remaining for a full tour.

Recommendation 8: The Bureau of African Affairs, in coordination with the Under Secretary for Management, should develop and implement a plan to provide experienced staff for two-year assignments to Embassy N'Djamena. (Action: AF, in coordination with M)

MANAGEMENT SERVICES

Management services at Embassy N'Djamena are provided by one officer supervising a general services officer (GSO), a facilities manager, a financial management officer (FMO), an information management officer (IMO), an information management specialist (IMS), a nurse practitioner, and a community liaison office (CLO) coordinator. The management officer also performs the duties of the human resources officer, although assistance is also provided by two virtual human resources officers who have visited the post to provide TDY assistance. At the time of the inspection, the FMO had departed post and the management officer had applied for curtailment

of his tour, effective in October. A new management officer has been assigned due to aggressive recruiting by the acting DCM, and a first-tour FMO is scheduled to arrive in August. TDY assistance from the AF rovers is being provided to the financial management section. New staff who are practical and hands-on should improve customer service orientation, which current management has not made a priority.

American oversight and planning are important aspects of developing a strong management section. Effective communications between American and LE staff is also essential to implementing policies and procedures, as well as for the general morale of the staff. Town meetings have been held with LE staff to discuss issues of high importance to them, but there has been no follow up in writing on announcements made at these meetings. For example, the announcement of changes to the local staff medical compensation plan at a town meeting, discussed below, created high expectations among the LE staff. When this was not followed by a written announcement and detailed explanation it created confusion, misunderstandings, and low morale.

Effective communications among key management office personnel could be enhanced through close supervisory oversight and frequent, detailed discussions of expectations and work requirements. Moreover, clear, written operating procedures would be helpful in bridging gaps between personnel assigned to American positions. While the management officer meets with each subsection there is no single group management meeting to discuss crosscutting issues. An informal recommendation urges the management officer to hold regularly scheduled meetings with the entire section. The Ambassador, prior to the evacuation in February, held regular meetings with the DCM and the management section, but those meetings have not resumed. The OIG team recommended informally that the Ambassador and acting DCM resume their regular meetings with the management section. The team also makes a recommendation below regarding corrective action plans for management controls to be developed into standard operating procedures that are thoroughly explained, used as training tools and made into the bedrock foundation for improved management services.

The OIG workplace and quality of life questionnaires reflected the considerable dissatisfaction with administrative services at Embassy N'Djamena as most ratings were below the worldwide average. The exceptions were in medical services, information technology services, and security services which were rated the highest.

by AF. Embassy N'Djamena receives virtual HR support from two human resources officers who have visited the post to provide TDY assistance for extended periods. Foreign Service national executive corps members rotate from other African posts to provide valuable experience as well as assist in training. In late July another TDY officer will arrive and spend two months auditing the general services office operations and working on corrective action plans for that section.

Embassy N'Djamena's regional medical support is from Bamako; regional psychiatry support comes from Frankfurt; regional laboratory technical support is from Lagos; and regional financial support is provided by the AF rovers.

The post support unit operating out of the Charleston and Bangkok financial service centers certifies all vouchers and obligates funds. The cost of this service to Embassy N'Djamena for FY 2008 is \$86,000. When the Embassy was under ordered departure status from February through early May, the unit was essential to maintaining financial services operations. The OIG team made an informal recommendation that once the new, permanent FMO arrives, this officer should assume the certifying responsibilities for the mission.

HUMAN RESOURCES

An embassy cannot operate without effective staff, both American and locally employed. LE staff provide the corporate memory and often keeps posts functioning in times of crisis and American staffing gaps. In this respect the HR section at Embassy N'Djamena is like a perfect storm. The current management officer, who is also the HR officer, received only two weeks of HR training at FSI prior to assignment and has now curtailed. The entire HR LE staff, consisting of a supervisor and two assistants, was fired for cause over a year ago, and post experienced an ordered departure that was traumatic for American staff, as well as LE staff, who endured an armed insurgency in their neighborhoods. In the past post has been in rough waters due to long staffing gaps for management officers. At one time this year the TDY DCM was serving also as the TDY management officer/HR officer, GSO, and FMO. Post management and AF's executive office have come to the rescue with life lines providing experienced TDY support, both from retired officers and the Foreign Service National Executive Corps. Like the aftermath of a perfect storm, post is still repairing the damage and cleaning up.

The current acting DCM, who was previously the acting HR officer, took command of the clean-up operations with a series of 19 corrective action plans which cover virtually every aspect of HR operations at post. The deficiencies are extensive

and require the use of two virtual HR officers who are not at post but are on call to answer questions as well as work on the long-term corrective action plans. Both virtual officers have served TDY assignments at post. In addition post uses the Foreign Service National Executive Corps for TDY assistance in updating records.

Despite the efforts, clean-up operations will take time and will not be completed until a new senior HR LE staff person is hired, trained, and working in the position. Until these actions are completed there will not be a daily supervisor or continuity in the section. Efforts are underway to hire this person, and the OIG team concurs with post management that the person must attend the HR officer training at FSI, spend two weeks working in another U.S. Embassy, and then have a Foreign Service National Executive Corps mentor for several weeks at post. In addition, the OIG team believes the next management officer should have the full HR officer training course at FSI.

The travel section is also part of HR and now consists of one person rather than three, as in the past. Travel arrangements can be difficult out of Chad, and more support is needed for the mission. Post plans to move a LE staff expediter into a split position within the Embassy that can assist travel as well as continue expediting services. A local 90-day contract will be awarded to provide travel training, including the use of the Internet. The OIG team concurs with such a plan as upgrading the travel section will greatly improve ICASS service.

Training is always in demand at a remote post. Many LE staff are trained both out of country and in house, but it often is nonpost funded. In FY 2008, about \$18,000 was funded for training, but this included travel by an American officer to a financial management conference. One of HR's corrective action plans calls for each section to evaluate training requirements and provide a justification in order to prioritize and project annual training needs. The OIG team made an informal recommendation for the Class B Cashier to take the next advanced cashier training. Post is run on a cash basis, and for the person responsible for the cash not to have all the training required is a management control weakness. The OIG team also believes that supervisory training has been neglected. There has been little training of LE staff in supervisory skills, which is clearly a prerequisite to LE staff empowerment. An informal recommendation is made to fund post supervisory training so that more staff may benefit.

In a country where the average annual income is below \$250, the average LE staff employee makes over \$12,000 a year, with local guards at just over \$7,000. In May, a raise of 4 to 5 percent was approved based upon grades. The transportation allowance was cut. The LE staff association's executive committee, which is elected every two years, now meets with management at least quarterly or when there are

specific issues. The OIG team believes a regularly scheduled meeting with an agenda, even if there are no pressing issues, is the best way to ensure continuous communication. LE staff, in a meeting with the inspectors, brought up a concern regarding the status of their medical evacuation benefit. They said it had been approved, but they had not been notified. In researching the issue the files did not show official action was taken by post management to respond to an April 13, 2007, telegram (07 State 094145) from the Department requesting certain financial data that was to be part of the compensation.

The Department's office of overseas employment responded to an OIG query that the last document in their file was 07 Ndjamena 00063 dated January 24, which requested the benefit. Without other documentation, post needs to respond in detail to the Department's cable for specific information, including costs and post's ability to fund the service. The funding bureaus would be AF's executive office and DS for the local guards.

Recommendation 9: Embassy N'Djamena should evaluate the need and the cost of providing medical evacuations to locally employed staff and communicate this information to funding bureaus in the Department. (Action: Embassy N'Djamena)

The current medical compensation plan is under review as post seeks opportunities to contract with local companies. Under the present medical reimbursement procedures, the employee pays 20 percent and clinic bills the remaining 80 percent to the Embassy. The financial management office fully administers the payment process to reimburse health providers. In practice the reimbursements consume valuable staff time, not only in the finance office but also the cashier and HR office. The Embassy is not in prime position to administer the medical program, lacking the staff and the expertise to do so. A contract is the Department's usual practice. Post is continuing to look at alternatives and has found two companies that might be able to offer the services needed and compete for the contract at a cost that exceeds current practice. The OIG team believes all options should be reviewed, including paying a medical allowance directly to the employee.

Issues that arose when discussing the medical plan included eligibility for coverage and the amount of post's liability. A revision of the medical plan dated October 1, 2007, states that coverage is for one spouse and six children as outlined in section II.C. In section 20, the annual aggregate maximum limit is stated to be 1.5 million Central Franc of Africa (CFA). When asked by OIG if the limit applied to each

eligible family member or to each entire family, there was some confusion. Depending on the answer, post's liability could range from 1.5 million CFA to 12 million CFA per family. One employee told OIG that his family of four had never reached 1.5 million CFA in reimbursements. However, members of the LE staff association executive committee understand the cap to apply to each family member and the employee, which could total eight people. The committee members maintain that this was explained at a town hall meeting several years ago. A recommendation is made for post to clarify with the Department what employee and family members are covered by what reimbursable limits.

Recommendation 10: Embassy N'Djamena, in coordination with the Bureau of Human Resources should clarify the language in the current medical plan as to the reimbursable limits and for which family members. (Action: Embassy N'Djamena, in coordination with DGHR)

Recommendation 11: Embassy N'Djamena should communicate the results of the clarification of reimbursable limits to all locally employed staff. (Action: Embassy N'Djamena)

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The financial management office has significant operational problems. LE staff does not perform with consistency and accuracy, and the last four FMOs curtailed their tours of duty. Continuity is provided with competent TDY assistance which has kept post's budgets from faltering completely. Another first-tour FMO, as all the others have been, is scheduled to arrive in August.

The ICASS customer services survey and the OIG workplace and quality of life questionnaires rated financial services in all sections lower than the worldwide averages. It is unusual to have every section ranked low and demonstrates the importance of the budget analysts, accounting technicians, and voucher examiners working together to provide financial services to the mission as a whole. The integration of the section is essential if the mission is to receive even adequate service.

To assist the new FMO in trying to correct what have been past problems in finance, the OIG team believes regular counseling sessions are necessary. There is no equitable system to evaluate the current eight LE staff who have been at post

for many years and received hands-on as well as off-site training. Past performance evaluations and promotions are not reflected in the quality of today's work. The section is working on updating work plans for each employee and defining areas for improvement. A review of each individual work plan should be completed and discussed with the employee every 60 days. If the FMO is not available to do this, the management officer should complete such an evaluation in his/her place. To ensure follow up OIG will track this recommendation for one year in compliance followup for the inspection report.

Recommendation 12: Embassy N'Djamena should evaluate every locally employed staff member in the financial management section every 60 days to assess strengths and weaknesses in performance and specifically track areas of improvement. (Action: Embassy N'Djamena)

The section has made progress in verifying \$91,000 of incorrect charges on the post purchase card used for travel, but the review of funds availability, obligations, and the validity of function codes is a problem for all purchases. The financial management section should conduct a review on a monthly basis to determine if codes are correct and if obligations are still valid. An informal recommendation was made in this regard. Position descriptions may not be available for all positions or accurate if they are available. For the size of the post the number of staff in finance may be excessive. However, documentation of performance as described above must be in place before any personnel adjustments can be made.

Medical reimbursements are a costly drain on staff time as the finance office is responsible for verifying the identity of the employee and dependents on the bills. The claim itself is not something that can be verified as it would require a clinical decision. The impact on the budget could be extensive as there is no way to predict cost and coverage is guaranteed to local employees. Post is looking to outsource this function with local clinics for full service LE staff medical care which would help to control costs. In FY 2008 the cost of care to date is about \$533,000 annually. The voucher examiner, formerly the Class B cashier, is responsible for paying clinic bills and providing reimbursements to local staff for medical bills as needed. An informal recommendation was made to finalize a position description for the voucher examiner/budget technician who had been the Class B cashier to include verification of billings with the clinics.

GENERAL SERVICES

The general services office encountered challenges beyond those that faced the entire mission, such as evacuations and personnel turnover. In January 2007, a faulty electrical cord and plug caused a fire in the general services office facility, resulting in considerable damage to storage areas, a computer server room, a telephone exchange room, and office spaces. The loss of property and displacement of personnel to temporary work spaces disrupted operations for more than a year, which was the time it took to complete repairs. During the same period, the Embassy allowed its warehouse lease to expire, which required movement of nonexpendable property (furniture, furnishings, appliances, machinery) to another facility. The GSO was absent from post for almost four months from February to June 2008. Notwithstanding the numerous obstacles that confront the general services and facilities sections, they manage to provide minimally adequate levels of service. Areas for improvement include safety, process definition and management, establishment of standards, and performance measurement. The overarching challenge is developing and sustaining a core of LE staff leaders and managers who can maintain consistent and continuous operations in the face of sometimes uneven leadership.

PROCUREMENT

The four-month absence of the GSO left the post without its primary contracting officer. Under normal conditions, the management officer or the facilities manager would be the logical alternate contracting officer, but neither had completed the training required for a provisional name warrant, and post did not elect to issue a temporary name warrant. A TDY officer arrived at post in early March 2008 and, though he was assigned the HR portfolio, he assumed the duties of contracting officer as he was already warranted as an AF rover. During the inspection and at the direction of the acting DCM, the management officer and the facilities manager completed the requisite training for warrants limited to \$100,000.

At the behest of the acting DCM, the management officer recently transferred procurement responsibility from the GSO to a LE staff member, with the acting DCM performing contracting officer duties. This arrangement was intended to decrease the GSO's workload on a temporary basis and thereby allow the GSO to concentrate on specific areas that required improvement. The acting DCM and management officer delineated new organizational and procedural responsibilities. However, processes, roles, and responsibilities remained unclear in spite of attempts to clarify procurement and other supply chain management duties. A clear, documented

process mapping of the procurement process and, indeed, post's entire supply chain management process — including ordering, receiving, property management, and payment — would help post to reduce risk and improve logistical operations.

Recommendation 13: Embassy N'Djamena should develop and implement procurement standard operating procedures that delineate duties, roles, responsibilities, policy, and procedures related to mission logistical operations. (Action: Embassy N'Djamena)

The procurement section has been using the automated Web Post Administrative Software Suite (WebPASS) procurement application since 2005, but not all modules are being employed and not all steps are being followed. The system therefore does not provide full functionality, including internal controls that would preclude procedural circumvention. For example, purchase requests that were not approved electronically by the contracting officer were processed for funds obligation and signed in hardcopy form. Another important WebPASS function that goes unused is the confirmation of final payment, which would prompt the procurement section to close out the purchase order. Full use of WebPASS procurement should promote more collaboration among management offices, improve management controls, help a clearer process for procurement, receiving, and financial management functions, and instill more discipline in the process.

Recommendation 14: Embassy N'Djamena should develop and implement a plan to fully utilize the WebPASS procurement application, including procurement, property management, and financial management functions. (Action: Embassy N'Djamena)

MOTOR POOL OPERATIONS

The motor pool operates 24/7 with 11 drivers. A review of records indicated the proper use of form OF 108 to document vehicle utilization, including passenger signatures, operator inspections, and refueling. Additionally, the dispatcher appeared to manage his workforce fairly by distributing the shift work evenly and ensuring annual leave was taken by all drivers.

While the passenger facet of motor pool operations is operating smoothly, one aspect clearly requires improvement. Despite the findings of a Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO) safety, health and environmental inspection conducted in February 2007, warehouse and facilities management personnel continue to ride in open truck beds, ostensibly due to a shortage of adequate vehicles. This is a particularly dangerous practice due to the poor condition of roads in N'Djamena and the size and weight of some items, such as large appliances, that are transported along with the personnel. The OBO safety inspector recommended as a high priority that post eliminate the custom of allowing personnel to ride in the cargo sections of trucks. The OIG inspector underscored to the GSO and the facilities manager (who is also the post occupational safety and health officer) the need to comply with the OBO recommendation. The GSO has not conducted a review of fleet use and composition to ensure that post has the right mix of vehicles and that they are distributed properly. Such a review could help identify vehicle assets that could be used to transport personnel safely or could be used to justify acquisition of additional vehicles.

Recommendation 15: Embassy N'Djamena should cease the practice of allowing personnel to ride in the cargo sections of trucks. (Action: Embassy N'Djamena)

Recommendation 16: Embassy N'Djamena should conduct a formal review of its vehicle fleet to determine the mix of vehicles necessary to support post needs, reconcile the outcome with on-hand inventory, and assign them accordingly. (Action: Embassy N'Djamena)

The OBO safety inspector conducted a two-hour block of instruction on driver safety for motor pool personnel during his visit in February 2007. However, post could benefit from an in-house capability to train and sustain a driver safety program, especially in light of road and driving conditions in the city and countryside. The OIG inspector informally recommended that post take advantage of the Department's train-the-trainer program in the Smith System of driver safety.

A number of drivers expressed interest in having OpenNet access so that they could pursue online training opportunities for personal and professional development. At the time of the inspection only three of the 11 motor pool drivers had access to OpenNet. Post's information program officer did not see technical reasons for denying access to drivers, so the OIG inspector informally recommended that post grant access, which may also facilitate sharing of information within the motor pool section.

CUSTOMS AND SHIPPING

The supply lines to N'Djamena are long and difficult, and post uses a mix of pouch and commercial means to ship goods and materiel. According to a World Bank assessment, the main overland route is one of the worst in Africa and is described as “[g]aping potholes, many official and unofficial checkpoints and miles and miles of uneven or unpaved dirt roads — this is the scene for motorists along part of the 2,000-kilometer stretch that connects the Douala Port in western Cameroon to the country's landlocked neighbors in N'Djamena, Chad.” Moreover, the increased use of the Douala to N'Djamena road by international organizations, such as the European Union forces, has placed even more pressure on the already inadequate route. As a result, shipments such as household effects are shipped by air, which increases costs and still average about one month to receive. Comparatively, sea and overland shipment of personally owned vehicles averages three to four months. Post is working with the European Logistical Support Office on a plan that may result in shipment of vehicles by air. In almost any case, shipping is problematic and untimely, which places more importance on careful acquisition planning and execution. The combination of circumstances — difficult shipping, less than adequate acquisition planning, unpredictable funding (such as continuing resolutions) — conspire to hinder proper supply chain management. Post is exploring various options, such as using local contractors instead of Douala-based freight forwarders, to cut the time for overland shipments.

FACILITIES

The facilities manager has had a full plate since his arrival in January 2008. As he worked to repair the fire-damaged general services office facility, the rebel action, evacuation, and ensuing damage occurred. In addition to those extraordinary events, he and his section face more fundamental challenges. In the area of basic safety

equipment, he recently received steel-toed shoes aimed at protecting the feet of workers who in some cases would be wearing open-toed sandals. However, employees still lack proper ear/eye/respiratory protection and work gloves. Work areas are barely adequate, and tools are very limited. For example, the wood shop had a portable planer, a radial saw that was donated to post by the former facilities manager, a nonfunctioning band saw, and a marginally functioning drill press. The welding shop was similarly sparsely equipped. As described earlier, transportation of personnel is routinely in the back of trucks, which was cited by the OBO safety inspector as a practice that should cease.

Recommendation 17: Embassy N'Djamena should develop and implement a plan to equip employees with proper safety equipment and clothing in accordance with pertinent safety, health, and environmental guidelines. (Action: Embassy N'Djamena)

The facilities maintenance section is using the proper automated work order system, but the process is not well defined or managed. For example, work orders normally are received by e-mail, but are also input directly into the automated system by personnel outside of the facilities management section, including the motor pool and the information programs section. This causes confusion in determining the nature of the work request, the action that should be taken, and whether the request is fulfilled. An outstanding work request from April 2007 was found in the system by the OIG inspector. A better defined and implemented work request process could improve workflow and internal controls, as well as help close out requests in a timely manner.

Recommendation 18: Embassy N'Djamena should define and implement its facilities management work order process to improve standardization, workflow efficiency, customer service, and internal controls. (Action: Embassy N'Djamena)

Based on consultations with OBO and post, the new embassy compound project scheduled for FY 2012 appears to be on track. The most immediate task is to identify and acquire property. OBO is working with post on this important project, which would yield a more secure facility and better work space for employees. OBO tentatively plans to advance the process by sending a technical evaluation team to post in the August-September timeframe.

When the facilities manager arrived at post, he also had responsibility for Embassy Bangui but has since sought and been granted relief from that additional burden. This will allow him to concentrate on immediate tasks at hand and on special projects proposed by post, which include replacing the chancery main staircase, making improvements to the former USAID building, and renovating a building on its long-term lease housing compound. OBO has deferred consideration of funding for these projects until post presents a compelling business case for its proposals.

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

The property management section clearly was affected by the general services office facility fire and the termination of the lease on the former warehouse, which was immediately adjacent to the general services office facility. The new warehouse facility is approximately a half a mile away and is not adequately configured as a warehouse. There is one large room that accommodates shelving, but the remaining rooms are relatively small and not well suited as storage facilities. Dust and inadequate ventilation/climate control also reduce the useful life expectancy of items stored in the building. Pending the eventual completion of a new embassy compound that is expected to include the general services office functions, however, the property management section is coping with its current facilities. A spot check of items in the inventory had positive results. A large number of items were listed as goods to be sold at an auction to be held at the end of July, which should free up some space in the warehouse facility.

The GSO and the senior LE staff member oversee the bulk fuel program at post. A fixed diesel pump located on the warehouse compound does not function, so diesel and gasoline normally are dispensed from portable tanks (1,500-liter gas and 7,900-liter diesel) in a lot adjacent to the embassy compound. One meter on the diesel tank which measures cumulative liters pumped has been broken since at least March 2008. This precludes use of an internal control mechanism to double check the fuel dispensing process and should be corrected as soon as possible. The GSO produced a purchase order dated May 19, 2008 for a new meter but has not followed up on it.

Recommendation 19: Embassy N'Djamena should follow up on the order for parts and repair for its diesel fuel tank to ensure meters function properly and are monitored as an internal control of fuel use. (Action: Embassy N'Djamena)

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

The information management section received high marks for customer service and satisfaction. It is led by an experienced IMO and a first-tour IMS, and provides a wide range of communications, computer, and pouch services to post. The IMO has taken a sensible and methodical approach to mentoring and developing the IMS, requiring the IMS to gain experience in each functional area before moving to the next. The IMO also has empowered LE staff by developing individual development plans for each one of them and giving key employees supervisory responsibilities. The information management staff is taking advantage of online training, such as the FSI-sponsored FasTrac, to increase expertise and maintain technical proficiency. The IMO worked hard to get as much language training as possible prior to arriving at post and managed to attend seven weeks of French, achieving a level of 2/2. He has found language proficiency, limited though it is, to be a great advantage in developing and sustaining a good working relationship with his LE staff.

Based on local conditions, and in the wake of the recent evacuation, the section has developed its priorities and is focusing sharply on accomplishing them in a quick and methodical manner. Foremost on their agenda were reestablishing normal operations and reconstructing basic documentation. They also recently upgraded their radio system to include new base stations, antennae, and hand-held units and are working to ensure uninterrupted power to the chancery telephone system. Other priorities for the section include building core competency in their LE staff by training and improving customer service by implementation of a simple, yet effective, e-mail trouble ticket system. The IMS also did a great service to the financial management section by developing a spreadsheet for tracking reimbursements, payment caps, and other information related to the local employees' medical services plan. The spreadsheet should help manage a very large and costly program, while mitigating some of the possible financial risk of fraud.

QUALITY OF LIFE

MORALE

Morale among employees is average, with American staff rating their personal morale at 3.14 on a scale of 1-poor to 5-excellent, and rating overall mission morale slightly lower at 2.79. A major contributing factor is the condition of the facilities in which employees work and live. The Embassy was originally expected to be replaced by a new embassy compound in 2008, but this has been delayed. OBO's Long-Range Overseas Buildings Plan currently has the new embassy compound planned for an FY 2012 award. In the meantime, the chancery and other buildings have suffered from lack of attention. Embassy housing is disparate amongst employees, and a number of houses were completely or partially looted during the February evacuation. The perception by some employees that housing is inadequate, coupled with a lack of available recreational activities outside of work, makes daily life a trying experience.

Other factors affecting morale are perceptions of poor customer service and apparent complacency with inadequate performance of duties. The American International School is closed, and following the February evacuation, minor children have not been allowed to return to Chad. This has caused several families to be separated unexpectedly.

The lack of a cafeteria or snack bar on the embassy compound ranked lowest on the LE staff personal questionnaires (averaging a score of 1 on a scale of 1-Poor to 5-Excellent) with only slightly better scores for training opportunities (2.23) and the post orientation program (2.60). Average score for LE staff personal morale was 3.0.

MEDICAL

The medical unit is one of the few areas rated highly in the most recent ICASS Customer Services Survey. The section is viewed as a positive benefit to the mission and provides competent care in a general environment where health care is difficult and diseases are prevalent. Personal counseling is conducted when required

or requested and, as needed, the LE staff receives treatment. Unit staffing includes one American nurse practitioner, one LE nurse, a part-time LE medical laboratory technologist, and an LE secretary. The nurse practitioner, who is a first-tour officer, has readily adapted to life in the Foreign Service and at an extremely difficult hardship post. The regional psychiatrist in Frankfurt and the regional medical officer in Bamako, Mali make quarterly visits. As noted above, the regional medical technologist is based in Lagos and provides back-up medical technology services in instances when the post lab is not capable of handling the work. There has been one medical evacuation of American personnel in the last year.

Maintaining adequate medical supplies at post is difficult. Ordering and receiving supplies from the Regional Procurement Services Office in Frankfurt can be a lengthy process, and often medicines have limited shelf life when they finally arrive. Use of the (WebPASS) module for inventory of drugs has helped, and controlled substances are correctly administered with stocks kept at a minimum. An electrocardiograph and lung spirometry instrument are two pieces of equipment that would assist the unit in providing better care to post personnel, but they have not been ordered due to funding restrictions. Each costs about \$10,000 and the OIG team encourages post management to fund the items if possible.

The LE nurse may not be appropriately graded. A new position description accurately listing duties and responsibilities should be developed and evaluated. An informal recommendation was made to do so.

Community Liaison Office

The first-time community liaison office (CLO) coordinator assumed her duties in June 2008 and is scheduled to attend training in September. Despite her inexperience in living overseas and in the Foreign Service, she has adapted well to the relative harsh living conditions in Chad. She has taken the initiative to read about CLO duties on the Family Liaison Office website. Her supervisor, the management officer, has not counseled the new coordinator on priorities, expectations, work requirements, mission management objectives, or other performance considerations. The OIG inspector informally recommended the management officer conduct this counseling as soon as possible so that the new coordinator can begin planning accordingly, as well as be better prepared prior to attending training in September.

Recreational Facilities

The Embassy has a gym and a pool on the compound, but they are both in need of attention. The pool needs a ladder to get in and out, and the surrounding area is devoid of any seating or outdoor cooking equipment. Purchasing a small charcoal grill and a few lawn chairs would make the area more inviting, and could turn the largely ignored pool area into a welcoming retreat. The gym has one functioning treadmill, a bicycle machine, some static exercise equipment, and a selection of free weights. Some new anaerobic exercise equipment would be a welcome addition to the facility. Painting and sprucing up this minimal facility would go a long way to improving American morale. With so few outside recreation possibilities — running and/or walking are not possible for security reasons, for example — having a decent gym and pool area is very important. A number of embassy employees spend time working on weekends, because there is little else to do. The inspection team made informal recommendations regarding improving the pool area and the post gym facilities, which should enhance morale at post.

MANAGEMENT CONTROLS

MANAGEMENT SECTION

The management section struggles to provide basic administrative and logistical support in the context of an extremely difficult operating environment, including frequent evacuations, supply chain management challenges, personnel turnover, and leadership/management deficits. Standing operating procedures, defined processes, and management controls generally do not exist. As a result, it is difficult to fix responsibility and accountability for tasks and operational areas. Management services, which should be integrated and interdependent, are fragmented. And, as the part affects the whole, serious shortcomings in one section diminish the effectiveness of the overall management office. Prior to the OIG inspection, the acting DCM directed each management office section to develop action plans to correct deficiencies, but the plans will take months, if not longer, to implement. However, post at least has mapped a way forward to implementing a longer-term solution to its management office problems.

Recommendation 20: Embassy N'Djamena should implement its corrective action plans that address functional weaknesses/shortcomings and report progress to the Office of the Inspector General by way of the compliance and followup review process for a period of one year following the publication of the final report. (Action: Embassy N'Djamena)

Post submitted its 2007 Annual Chief of Mission Management Control Statement Assurance to AF on January 30, 2008, missing the deadline by several months. The regional bureau's deadline for this year's statement is August 15, 2008. Post indicated that it will use the action plans developed in preparation for the OIG inspection as part of the assessment and prescription for improving its management controls.

FINANCE

The Class B cashier operation is completing daily reconciliations and monthly cashier verifications. The current cashier, with an authorization of \$150,000, has not attended the advanced cashier course. An informal recommendation was made that he attends the next available course. The cashier was entitled to a grade increase July 7, 2007, but did not receive it even though his performance was rated good. An informal recommendation was made to increase the grade to what it has historically been and retroactively pay the cashier at the new salary. There have been problems with post's cashiers, and the former cashier, who is now a voucher examiner, is still accountable for \$1,451. The Department has requested the amount of the discrepancy be paid back by the former cashier. The employee is personally appealing the Department's decision after post's appeal was denied.

Consular cash has been an issue in the past because verifications were not properly done. At present there are no visas issued, but post is advised to ensure proper internal controls are in place should visas be issued in the future. The general services section, located outside the main embassy compound, does not have a subcashier. The use of procurement staff as occasional money holders creates additional paperwork for the cashier and is time consuming for the procurement section. The OIG team observed one transaction that included eight individual payments that were prepared for the occasional money holder for only one day. An informal recommendation was made to designate a subcashier in the general services office, as well as to update post's policy on occasional money holders.

The use of WebPASS has been time consuming because the electronic signature block is disabled. During the inspection, the OIG inspector worked with post staff to arrange activation of this feature for use by finance and procurement staff. This will save time that is now spent manually retrieving signatures for procurements and will ensure signature validity. This issue demonstrates the need for effective communications between finance and the general services office procurement.

Weekly meetings between the sections were started several months ago, but they now languish. An informal recommendation was made to hold monthly meetings, at a minimum, attended also by the management officer or senior post management and other serviced agencies, as needed.

A system to track phone calls at the embassy is now in place. The finance office has set up a call log that assists in charging for personal calls. However, charging for personal use of cell phones is still problematic as the service provider rolls over the same usage every month automatically for the employee assigned the phone. An in-

formal recommendation was made for post to review this practice and determine if it is cost effective or what other controls on cell phone calls are possible. The finance section and the general services office should also work together to set up a procedure for billing home-to-office transportation and other chargeable authorized use of government vehicles.

There are 19 corrective action plans for finance. However, the OIG inspector made informal recommendations for certain areas in which corrective action plans do not define what process should be implemented. Therefore, the OIG inspector informally recommended that there should be current and written operating procedures for the occasional money holders and a written procedure on travel vouchers, to include documents needed by the finance officer to process the voucher.

HUMAN RESOURCES

The corrective action plans for HR listed above include 19 areas for improvement. The work is in progress in these areas using the virtual HR officers, so the OIG team does not make any recommendations in many of them as progress will be tracked by the corrective action plans above. There are some exceptions, however, in which the OIG inspector made informal recommendations. Specifically,

- Post should take necessary steps to ensure evaluation reports for American and LE staff are completed in a timely manner but not later than their due dates. Post should consider including this requirement in supervisors' work requirement statements as a means to formalize the practice. Additionally supervisory responsibilities should be in the work requirements.
- Post should develop and implement procedures for starting and stopping allowances in a timely manner, particularly when an employee departs post.
- Post should develop and implement a plan to reevaluate, using the computer assisted job evaluation system, the approximately 20 position descriptions currently identified as requiring updating, as well as other positions subsequently identified. The OIG inspector understands that post's virtual HR officers will undertake this task. OIG made an informal recommendation that new position descriptions be written for the local nurse, the surveillance detection site supervisor, and the former cashier who is now serving as a voucher examiner. The new position descriptions should reflect current duties and be reevaluated to determine the appropriate grade.

- Post should update and distribute to all staff the LE staff handbook, which was revised in FY 2004 but not published. The handbook should include the finalized version of the medical evacuation and medical compensation plans. The HR office should ensure on all levels that the handbook conforms to labor laws of the government of Chad. The handbook should be reviewed with the LE staff or a committee set up to conduct the review to ensure conformance to local labor law.

CONSULAR

Consular cash has been an issue in the past because verifications were not properly done. At present there are no visas issued, but an informal recommendation was made to advise post to ensure proper internal controls are in place should visas be issued in the future.

FORMAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recommendation 1:** The Bureau of African Affairs should cease insisting on approving country clearance on any particular subset of U.S. Government officials traveling to Chad now that ordered departure status has been removed. (Action: AF)
- Recommendation 2:** Embassy N'Djamena should determine the level and type of management office support it should provide to elements of Special Operations Command Europe and, in coordination with the Bureau of African Affairs and consultation with Special Operations Command Europe, should develop and implement a plan to fulfill the support requirements. (Action: Embassy N'Djamena, in coordination with AF)
- Recommendation 3:** Embassy N'Djamena, in coordination with the Bureau of Consular Affairs and the Bureau of Human Resources, should work to ensure that any officer assigned to N'Djamena with the requisite training or recent consular experience receives a consular title and serves as a back-up consular officer. In the absence of qualified officers, post should have incoming officers take the requisite consular training prior to arriving at post post. (Action: Embassy N'Djamena, in coordination with CA and DGHR)
- Recommendation 4:** Embassy N'Djamena should ensure any temporary duty consular officers and the future permanently assigned consular officer, in addition to the basic consular training course, complete the specific training named in the "Model Letter of Designation for Accountable Consular Officer for Fees" prior to assuming the role of post's consular section chief. (Action: Embassy N'Djamena)
- Recommendation 5:** Embassy N'Djamena should designate, in writing, the consular officer as the primary accountable consular officer and his/her back-up as the alternate accountable consular officer. (Action: Embassy N'Djamena)
- Recommendation 6:** Embassy N'Djamena should create chronological daily and monthly financial accounting files in accordance with Department regulations. (Action: Embassy N'Djamena)

Recommendation 16: Embassy N'Djamena should conduct a formal review of its vehicle fleet to determine the mix of vehicles necessary to support post needs, reconcile the outcome with on-hand inventory, and assign them accordingly. (Action: Embassy N'Djamena)

Recommendation 17: Embassy N'Djamena should develop and implement a plan to equip employees with proper safety equipment and clothing in accordance with pertinent safety, health and environmental guidelines. (Action: Embassy N'Djamena)

Recommendation 18: Embassy N'Djamena should define and implement its facilities management work order process to improve standardization, workflow efficiency, customer service and internal controls. (Action: Embassy N'Djamena)

Recommendation 19: Embassy N'Djamena should follow up on the order for parts and repair for its diesel fuel tank to ensure meters function properly and are monitored as an internal control of fuel use. (Action: Embassy N'Djamena)

Recommendation 20: Embassy N'Djamena should implement its corrective action plans that address functional weaknesses/shortcomings and report progress to the Office of the Inspector General by way of the compliance and followup review process for a period of one year following the publication of the final report. (Action: Embassy N'Djamena)

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.

American citizens service hours are posted outside the embassy gate in French but not English. Hours are misplaced on the Embassy's Web site.

Informal Recommendation 1: Embassy N'Djamena should update its Internet site content, and ensure the embassy location, hours, and contact information is placed prominently in the American citizens services section.

The management officer does not hold regularly scheduled meetings with his staff, so communications are not as effective as they should be.

Informal Recommendation 2: Embassy N'Djamena's management officer should hold weekly meetings with all management sections represented to discuss cross-cutting issues and follow up on outstanding actions/projects.

The English language program office subscribes to ICASS services, but it has one motorcycle purchased by the procurement section that was not registered properly as an official vehicle due to a misunderstanding with the general services office.

Informal Recommendation 3: Embassy N'Djamena general services office should work with the English language program office to properly register its U.S. Government-owned motorcycle.

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Informal Recommendation 4: Embassy N'Djamena's general services office, in coordination with the regional security office and the financial management office, should provide transportation support to the English language program office, including the deposit of funds with the embassy Class B cashier.

ICASS service standards have not been updated since 2003.

Informal Recommendation 5: Embassy N'Djamena should review its International Cooperative Administrative Support Service standards to ensure they are valid, achievable, and acceptable to its customers, and amend them as necessary.

There is no current memorandum of understanding between the ICASS service provider and agencies participating in the system.

Informal Recommendation 6: Embassy N'Djamena International Cooperative Administrative Support Service providers should conclude a memorandum of understanding with International Cooperative Administrative Support Service agencies.

The TDY visitor policy is in place but has not been updated to meet new standards issued by the ICASS working group.

Informal Recommendation 7: Embassy N'Djamena should update its temporary duty visitor policy.

Supervisory training for LE staff has been neglected, though their development of supervisory skills is clearly a prerequisite to LE staff empowerment.

Informal Recommendation 8: Embassy N'Djamena should conduct supervisory training so that more staff may benefit and develop the skills necessary to lead and manage others.

The post support unit operating out of the Charleston and Bangkok financial service centers certifies all vouchers and obligates funds. The cost of this service to Embassy N'Djamena for FY 2008 is \$86,000. When the Embassy was under ordered departure status from February through early May, the unit was essential to maintaining financial services operations. Once the new, permanent FMO arrives this officer should assume the certifying responsibilities for the mission.

Informal Recommendation 9: Embassy N'Djamena should ensure the new, permanent financial management officer assumes the certifying responsibilities for the mission upon arrival.

The LE nurse in the medical unit may not be appropriately graded. A new position description accurately listing duties and responsibilities should be developed and evaluated.

Informal Recommendation 10: Embassy N'Djamena should ensure a new position description accurately listing duties and responsibilities for the locally employed nurse in the medical unit is prepared and evaluated by the virtual human resource officers.

There is no regular process to review the status of funds, validity of obligations, or verify if function codes are correct. This issue was also a recommendation in the OIG report of 2004.

Informal Recommendation 11: Embassy N'Djamena should develop and implement a plan to review regularly the status of funds and verify obligations and function codes. The report should be reviewed by the financial management officer and the management officer and error rates may be reflected in performance evaluations.

In the financial management section, the voucher examiner, formerly the Class B cashier, is responsible for paying clinic bills and providing reimbursements to local staff for medical bills as needed. This individual's position description does not include verification of billings with the clinics.

Informal Recommendation 12: Embassy N'Djamena should finalize a position description for the voucher examiner/budget technician who had been the Class B cashier to include verification of billings with the clinics.

The acting DCM directed that certain general services office responsibilities be redistributed, resulting in a LE staff member supervising the procurement section and the acting DCM serving as the contracting officer. While this may be within the prerogatives of post and the acting DCM, it creates an organizational structure and potentially processes that are outside the norm. Moreover, the acting DCM may have insufficient time to devote to procurement activities. If responsibilities devolve to the senior LE staff in the section, he does not have sufficient experience and training to function effectively. Additionally, the contracting officer and overall supervisor for the section must be an American officer.

Informal Recommendation 13: Embassy N'Djamena should ensure that an American officer retains responsibility for procurement and contracting.

Driving conditions in Chad are difficult. Many roads are unpaved, seasonal hazards exist, and rules of the road are not routinely observed. Embassy drivers would benefit from a locally administered and sustained driver safety program, such as the Smith System program that is sponsored by the Department's Safety, Health and Environmental Management office.

Informal Recommendation 14: Embassy N'Djamena should develop and implement a plan for participation in the Department's Smith System of driver safety.

With limited resources and the high expense of off-site training, the Department is emphasizing online training for employees, especially the Foreign Service Institute's FASTRAC program. Employees such as most motor pool drivers, however, do not have access to OpenNet workstations. Such access would afford them the opportunity for personal and professional development.

Informal Recommendation 15: Embassy N'Djamena should grant motor pool drivers and other employees, as it deems appropriate, OpenNet access to facilitate online training and personal/professional development.

The management officer supervises the CLO coordinator, who is new to her position and has no prior experience. The management officer has not counseled the new coordinator regarding work requirements, priorities, objectives, or other job performance factors.

Informal Recommendation 16: The management officer should conduct work requirements counseling of the community liaison office coordinator regarding, inter alia, priorities, objectives, performance measures, and factors.

With so few outside recreation possibilities — running and/or walking are not possible for security reasons, for example — having a decent gym and pool area is very important. A few, relatively minor improvements to the facilities would bring benefits in improved morale.

Informal Recommendation 17: Embassy N'Djamena should take steps to improve the pool area and the post gym facilities as outlined.

The cashier operation is complex, and the programs are continually revised. The present Class B cashier received basic cashier training in 2000 as an alternate cashier but has never attended the advanced cashier course.

Informal Recommendation 18: Embassy N'Djamena should send the Class B cashier to the next available advanced cashier training course.

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There are no subcashiers in the general services office. Staff therefore is required to come to the cashier and collect each individual transaction, resulting in more work for both the general services office and finance to process the individual transactions.

Informal Recommendation 20: Embassy N'Djamena should designate a subcashier for the general services office.

There is no policy in accordance with 4 FAH-3 H-392 for occasional money handlers.

Informal Recommendation 21: Embassy N'Djamena should develop and publish a policy for occasional money handlers.

There is little to no communication between the general services office and finance regarding purchases and funding. This results in slow service and possible missed opportunities to deobligate funds that are not being utilized.

Informal Recommendation 22: Embassy N'Djamena should implement monthly meetings with the general services office and finance, to include attendance by the management officer and other serviced agencies if needed.

There is no control over cell phone usage for business or personal use. The service provider rolls over the same amount of minutes every month automatically.

Informal Recommendation 23: Embassy N'Djamena should review the use of cell phones and determine what controls on personal usage are needed and which employees should have roll over minutes.

Payment of travel vouchers is a problem for post and is compounded by using the off-shore post support unit. There appears to be inconsistencies in how the process works and what documents are required.

Informal Recommendation 24: Embassy N'Djamena should prepare and publish an administrative notice describing the travel voucher process and what documents are required from the traveler before the payment process can begin.

Post staff, both American and LE, has difficulty meeting deadlines for submission of evaluation reports, and LE staff supervisors are unclear as to their supervisory responsibilities. Work requirements are not specific as to the requirement to meet deadlines or supervisory responsibilities.

Informal Recommendation 25: Embassy N'Djamena should include in work requirements for Americans and LE staff in supervisory positions a description of supervisory responsibilities and the requirement to meet evaluation report deadlines.

Post does not start and stop allowances for American personnel in a timely manner.

Informal Recommendation 26: Post should develop and implement procedures for starting and stopping allowances in a timely manner, particularly when an employee departs post.

There are approximately 20 position descriptions for LE staff currently in need of updating.

Informal Recommendation 27: Embassy N'Djamena should develop and implement a plan to reevaluate, using the computer assisted job evaluation system, the approximately 20 position descriptions currently identified as requiring updating, as well as other positions subsequently identified. In particular, new position descriptions for the local nurse, the surveillance detection site supervisor, and the former cashier serving as a voucher examiner, should reflect current duties and be reevaluated to determine the appropriate grade.

The post LE staff handbook was revised in FY 2004 but not published or distributed.

Informal Recommendation 28: Embassy N'Djamena should update and distribute to all staff the locally employed staff handbook. The handbook should include the finalized version of the medical evacuation and medical compensation plans. Locally employed staff should assist human resources in ensuring that the handbook conforms to the government of Chad labor laws.

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PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS

	Name	Arrival Date
Ambassador	Louis J. Nigro	12/07
Deputy Chief of Mission (TDY Acting)	Samuel A. Rubino	03/08

Chiefs of Sections:

Administrative	Bradford C. Palmer	09/07
Consular (TDY)	Brandi N. James	06/08
Political/Economic	Rebecca S. Daley	01/07
Public Affairs	Solomon A. Atayi	09/07
Regional Security	David M. Richeson	07/07

Other Agencies:

Department of Defense (Acting DATI)	MAJ Stephen R. Edwards	01/08
U.S. Agency for International Development	(U.S. Personal Services Contract position now vacant)	

ABBREVIATIONS

ACO	accountable consular officer
ACS	American citizens services
AF	Bureau of African Affairs
BBG	Broadcasting Board of Governors
CA	Bureau of Consular Affairs
CFA	Central Franc of Africa
CLO	community liaison office
COCOM	combatant commander
COM	Chief of Mission
Department	Department of State
DCM	deputy chief of mission
DOD	Department of Defense
DS	Bureau of Diplomatic Security
EUCOM	European Command
FMO	financial management officer
FSI	Foreign Service Institute
GSO	general services officer
HR	human resources
ICASS	International Cooperative Administrative Support Services
IMO	information management officer
IMS	information management specialist
LE	locally employed
NSDD-38	National Security Decision Directive-38

OBO	Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations
OIG	Office of Inspector General
PAO	public affairs officer
PD	public diplomacy
REFCOORD	refugee coordinator
RSO	regional security officer
SOCEUR	Special Operations Command Europe
TDY	temporary duty
TSCTP	Trans-Sahel Counterterrorism Partnership
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
WebPASS	Web Post Administrative Software Suite

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