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

Report of Inspection

Embassy Warsaw, Poland Consulate General Krakow, Poland

Report Number ISP-I-07-01A, November 2006

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KEY JUDGMENTS

- Embassy Warsaw skillfully manages U.S.-Polish relations, which have entered a delicate stage since the formation of a coalition government that includes minority partners associated with anti-Semitic or right-wing nationalist positions. The mission is successfully maintaining traditionally close and cooperative relations with Poland while reaffirming U.S. positions of principle.
- Leadership of the mission is effective in conducting relations with Poland. The Ambassador plays to his strengths as a former mayor, traveling throughout Poland to meet with local and regional officials. He maintains a heavy load of representational responsibilities in addition to meeting with senior officials of the Polish government. The deputy chief of mission (DCM) is an experienced manager who oversees operations in the embassy and provides day-to-day policy guidance.
- The consulate general building in Krakow is dangerously inadequate, a threat to life for safety reasons, and a serious security concern. This deficiency was identified in the Office of Inspector General's (OIG) inspection report on Embassy Warsaw five years ago. The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO) plans to begin construction of a new office building in FY 2008, and this plan must be implemented as a matter of urgency.
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- The consular renovation project at Embassy Warsaw has been funded but has lagged because of conflicting assignment of responsibilities between the Department of State's (Department) Washington, DC, headquarters and the embassy. OBO in Washington needs to appoint a single project director with overall responsibility and a site construction manager to oversee implementation.
- Emergency preparedness arrangements for the embassy annex need to be enhanced. (These matters are discussed in this report's classified annex.)

- Embassy Warsaw will need to assure adequate security coverage of Krakow, following the loss of the assistant regional security officer (ARSO) position, by ensuring that a Warsaw-based ARSO spends at least half his time in Krakow. The Bureau of Diplomatic Security (DS) will need to fund that ARSO's travel and per diem payments.
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The inspection took place in Washington, DC, between April 10 and May 5, 2006; at the U.S. Missions to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU) on May 8; and in Warsaw, Poland, between May 9 and June 1; Poznan, Poland, on May 13; and Krakow, Poland, between May 13 and May 20, 2006. (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)
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CONTEXT

With its accession to the EU and NATO, Poland has achieved integration into European and Euro-Atlantic security, political, and economic institutions, its primary, post-Cold War security goal. Poland strongly supports further NATO enlargement, actively mentors NATO-aspirant countries in their transitions, and promotes democracy, security, and stability among its neighbors in Eastern Europe.

The United States and Poland have historic ties and for several years have enjoyed close, strategic relations. Polish public opinion generally supports U.S. policies and American ideas about democracy and free markets. Although a majority of Poles oppose the war in Iraq, the Polish government maintains troops in Iraq and Afghanistan.



Embassy Warsaw's Mission Performance Plan (MPP) emphasizes strengthening U.S.-Polish ties in defense, security, and foreign policy. The mission gives priority to assisting Poland to expand its contributions to the global war on terror and to disruption of criminal organizations. In addition, the United States cooperates with Poland's regional democratization efforts.

The mission promotes more rapid growth of the Polish economy (to support U.S.-Polish common agendas). The United States is the second largest investor in Poland, and the mission seeks to expand U.S. access to trade and investment opportunities. The mission's public affairs section (PAS) seeks to ensure that Polish youth continue to be drawn to U. S. exchange opportunities despite competition from the EU programs that became available with Poland's EU membership.

The embassy must manage the Poles' unrealistic expectation of reciprocal actions from the United States in exchange for Poland's strong support of the United States in Iraq and elsewhere. Irritants for Poland include U.S. security assistance levels and the fact that Poland is not included in the visa waiver program, unlike other western European NATO members.

The mission consists of the embassy, a consulate general in Krakow, and a consular agency in Poznan. Agencies represented in Poland include the Departments of State, Defense, Commerce, Agriculture, Homeland Security, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The Drug Enforcement Administration was scheduled to be represented beginning in the summer of 2006.

The mission employs 149 Americans and 382 locally employed staff (LES). Of these, Consulate General Krakow employs 13 Americans and 59 LES to represent U.S. interests in southern Poland, promote trade, and process 65,000 nonimmigrant visas (NIV) annually – one of the highest visa loads in Europe. The mission places high priority on providing a new, safe, fully secure building for Consulate General Krakow while maintaining operations. A consular agent in Poznan represents U.S. interests and provides American citizens services (ACS) in western Poland. Total mission funding for FY 2006 is \$22.8 million. Total bilateral assistance for FY 2005 was estimated at \$139.7 million.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTION

A CLOSE BUT CHALLENGING RELATIONSHIP

U.S.-Polish relations are extraordinarily strong and close. President Bush has said, "I've got no better friend in Europe today than Poland." The Polish government sent troops to Afghanistan and Iraq and frequently strongly supports U.S. positions in the EU and other international forums. The United States works with Poland as one of its closest allies in the areas of defense, security, foreign policy, and intelligence. Poland in turn gives its transatlantic ties highest priority.

At the same time, maintaining the close relationship has entered a challenging phase. The Poles believe the United States should reciprocate Poland's strong support for the United States with concrete actions. Particular irritants are the failure of the United States to include Poland in the visa waiver program, and U.S. security assistance levels also are seen as inadequate.

The recently formed coalition government presents an additional challenge. Poland's post-communist, center-left government and president were replaced in the last election by post-Solidarity, center-right successors from the Law and Justice Party. That party has entered into a coalition with the populist Self-Defense Party and the right-wing League of Polish Families. Ministers from these smaller coalition partners have been associated with groups known, respectively, for their pro-Moscow and anti-gay, anti-Semitic views. Inclusion of these partners in the coalition government has caused concern in Washington and elsewhere.

EMBASSY LEADERSHIP

The Ambassador was sworn in as chief of mission in June 2004. He previously served 31 years in Tennessee state and city elective offices, including an unprecedented 16 years as the mayor of Knoxville. The Ambassador plays to his strengths as a former mayor, conducting an extensive travel and outreach program. He has traveled to all of Poland's 16 provinces and met with more mayors, religious, and local

officials than most, if not all, of the senior Polish leaders. Although these activities successfully carry the American message to many corners of Poland, they would be more effective if they had a clearer strategic direction.

The Ambassador carries out a public diplomacy program in Warsaw as well, making many speeches and attending numerous official, cultural, educational, and promotion-of-American-business functions. He maintains a heavy representational workload, hosting frequent breakfast working meetings and evening receptions. During OIG's visit, he hosted an event nearly every day. These events were well organized and implemented.

Under the Ambassador's direction, the embassy effectively meets the challenge of dealing with Poland's new government with its two controversial minority parties. Despite the political shift in power and the steep learning curve of the inexperienced new Polish government, there has been considerable continuity in U.S.-Polish cooperation on foreign policy and security issues. Where there are differences, the embassy is making its positions of principle known. During the inspection, the Ambassador met with several senior Polish leaders to advance the American agenda, including a meeting with one Polish minister associated with an anti-Semitic group. In the meetings, he stressed the need for tolerance.

On internal embassy management, the Ambassador relies on the DCM for oversight of operations but has made clear he wishes to be kept informed. This includes attention to the security and safety of the mission, matters about which he is deeply concerned. In addition to country team meetings, he meets weekly with section heads when not traveling. He also meets with relevant sections on political-military matters, law enforcement, public diplomacy, and economic-commercial issues. Other agency heads say they have a good working relationship with the Ambassador and easy access to him.

The MPP process brings together all mission elements. The MPP is developed through consultation and solicitation of mission elements' contributions and places a high premium on using embassy-wide expertise from each section.

The DCM is an experienced senior Foreign Service officer who previously served as DCM in Prague. The Ambassador relies on him for management and day-to-day policy oversight. The DCM does an effective job of carrying out these responsibilities. In a large embassy that has multifaceted interaction with the Polish government, the DCM stays in close touch with operations, particularly on the substantive side. A political officer by cone, or job specialization, the DCM closely monitors the work of the political section, occasionally getting more into details of political section activity than may be necessary. However he does not routinely engage in micromanagement.

The DCM also effectively ensures coordination of the extensive U.S. interaction with Poland on military and political-military matters, work involving the Office of Defense Cooperation (ODC), Defense attaché office (DAO) and political-military officer. The ODC and DAO, which often have differing views of the lines of responsibility for overlapping military issues, rely heavily on the DCM for guidance. The Ambassador is also interested in military issues and frequently participates in military-related activities.

For internal management of embassy operations, the DCM relies on the management counselor who reports to him, intervening directly as needed on individual issues. This has caused some management staff to believe the DCM is not directly interested in their work. The OIG team informally suggested the DCM increase his direct contact with management sections.

CONSULATE GENERAL KRAKOW

Consulate General Krakow is very well run and managed. The consul general (CG) is a well-organized leader who motivates and guides his staff toward clearly articulated goals. On OIG questionnaires, the post's staff ranked the CG very highly, which is also reflected in their high morale. The CG is an effective monitor of the post's numerous entry-level officers (ELO) and encourages them to take on issues and responsibilities outside of their portfolios. The CG conducts an effective outreach, public diplomacy, and trade promotion program. Relations between Embassy Warsaw and Krakow are effective and collegial. Consulate General Krakow reports that it receives the leadership and support it needs without being micromanaged.

The consulate general building in Krakow is dangerously inadequate, a threat to life for safety reasons and a serious security concern. OBO plans to replace it with a new office building; construction is slated to begin in FY 2008. Further details on the deficiencies of the Krakow office building are discussed later in this report under the real property section. Security enhancements recommended for the interim until a new office building is built are addressed in the classified annex to this report.

The OIG team considered, for greater efficiency and potential savings, whether to recommend moving the NIV function from Krakow to Warsaw, a three-hour train ride away. NIV operations constitute the largest part of personnel and space resources in the consulate general. Moving NIV operations to Warsaw would allow for construction of a smaller new building in Krakow at less cost. However, this option would require a feasibility study to determine if Embassy Warsaw's planned consular renovation project could be expanded to accommodate the extra personnel required

as well as whether the embassy could manage the numbers. (Krakow's 65,000 annual NIV applicants would be added to Warsaw's 90,000.) In the end, this option was not recommended as the studies, plans and decisions to be taken would likely have entailed substantial and unacceptable delay. The serious deficiencies of the existing building pose such serious and immediate concerns for safety and security that it is imperative that OBO's plans to acquire a site and construct a new building in FY 2008 proceed without delay.

MENTORING ENTRY-LEVEL OFFICERS

The mentoring of ELOs is a responsibility the DCM carries out well. There is a written program for ELO mentoring entitled *Twenty Ways to Get a Head Start in the Foreign Service*. The OIG team met with all of the ELOs and found they had received the memo on arrival and that the program is being carried out. The DCM meets monthly with ELOs, sometimes at his residence and other times at a brown bag lunch. ELOs are rotated within and between sections, as well as occasionally on exchanges with Consulate General Krakow. They are invited to representational functions at the Ambassador's residence, serve as control officers for trips, and attend meetings with senior officials as note-takers. ELOs expressed their satisfaction with the mentoring program in Warsaw.

MORALE

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(b) (6) A number of American employees said the Ambassador is friendly but added that his frequent travel to all parts of Poland and other official activities outside of the embassy gave them the impression he was not engaged or interested in the substantive work of the mission. At the same time, LES praised the Ambassador for inviting them to his residence. Staff also gave high marks to the DCM for clear guidance, quick decisionmaking, and operational oversight but found his manner occasionally abrupt and impersonal. The OIG team found no reason to believe the front office fails to support Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) principles, although this report does recommend closer adherence to Department EEO program procedures.

When these impressions were conveyed to the front office, the Ambassador and DCM welcomed the feedback and solicited ideas on how to address morale. The OIG team offered a number of suggestions. They include:

- holding regular meetings with the community liaison office (CLO) coordinator,
- including junior staff occasionally – and not just section heads - in meetings with the Ambassador,
- having the DCM meet with the sections when the Ambassador is traveling,
- periodically going to the sections to attend staff meetings,
- walking around the embassy more frequently to chat with individual employees at their workplaces, and
- holding town hall meetings with all employees, perhaps with one section giving a presentation on its work in an effort to promote the sense of community and common vision.

SECURITY MANAGEMENT

Embassy Warsaw has a relatively large security office with a number of structured security programs and clearly defined security portfolios for its officers. For example, one ARSO oversees the local guard program, provides input for background investigations of American employees, supervises two cleared American escorts, directs and oversees the work of a residential security coordinator, addresses all physical security issues and counterintelligence issues, and coordinates the mission's combined effort on the emergency action plan.

A second ARSO oversees the operation of the surveillance detection unit, provides new arrival security briefings, manages the security incident report program, and will devote half of his time to managing Consulate General Krakow's security program. The regional security officer (RSO) position in Krakow will be abolished in the summer of 2006. The one-time RSO position was in place for three years, and its RSO established the consulate general's first comprehensive security program. Four local guards and eight surveillance detection specialists support the consulate general's security program.

The RSO in Warsaw supervises and manages the security staff, which includes a security engineering officer and a security technical specialist who also services three other diplomatic posts in the region.

The RSO has established a strong working relationship with Polish security officials and is attempting to continue that practice with Polish police officials at the police force's recently reorganized national headquarters. The RSO co-chairs the Overseas Security Advisory Council in Poland and is also a nonvoting member on the mission's housing board.

The mission's security also benefits from two Foreign Service national (FSN) investigators, a surveillance detection coordinator, a guard force commander, and a residential security coordinator. The Ambassador recognizes the importance of these individuals and the guard force and has acknowledged their efforts by hosting a barbeque at his residence for all the guards and their spouses.

The embassy, which is slated for replacement in 2014, has made several security improvements, including one Best Practice (see below). In addition, several other

physical security improvements and procedural security changes can be made to protect the embassy until its facility is replaced. These are discussed in greater detail in the classified annex to this report. The inadequate and unsafe Consulate General Krakow office building is scheduled to be replaced by a new office building, with construction to begin in FY 2008. Interim security enhancements for Consulate General Krakow are also discussed in detail in the classified annex.

POLICY AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

TRANSFORMATIONAL DIPLOMACY

The U.S. mission carries out transformational diplomacy in several important areas. It actively works with the government of Poland and nongovernmental organizations on democratization in Poland and in its neighboring countries. Embassy Warsaw has been working with and encouraging the Polish government in promoting democracy in the Ukraine, for example.

Prior to Poland's 2004 accession to the EU, the mission had access to Support for Eastern European Democracy funds and supported economic and democratic reforms extensively in Poland with these funds. These funds are no longer available, but the public affairs, political, and economic sections, in cooperation with other mission elements, continue to address these issues in partnership with the Polish government and working independently with Polish society. The embassy works on the promotion of the rule of law, tolerance of diversity (including Holocaust-related issues), media freedom, journalism education, civil society development, and the fight against trafficking in persons.

REPORTING AND ANALYSIS

POLITICAL SECTION

The political section is well managed and focuses primarily on maintaining the existing close ties between Poland and the United States. This consists principally of political-military issues and, particularly in the last year, on internal political developments. Morale in the section is good. Washington readers speak highly of the section's cable reports. Action officers in Washington said they depend heavily on a constant e-mail exchange with the post on more narrow topics and time-sensitive activities.

At the time of the inspection, the section consisted of the counselor, four mid-level officers, one rotational ELO, and an office management specialist. Three LES perform analysis, draft cables and letters, and provide administrative support. Effective with the June 2006 departure of the deputy political counselor, that position will be abolished under the Global Diplomatic Repositioning Initiative, bringing staffing into accord with the section's needs. Prior to OIG's arrival, Embassy Warsaw requested that the labor officer position be redesignated as a political officer position because the officer spends nearly all of his time on internal political issues and hardly any on labor issues.

The section is particularly well integrated and congenial. Communication within the section includes a weekly staff meeting with the entire American and Polish staff and a shorter daily meeting of the American staff and the senior LES. Countless informal interactions occur during the working day. Representation and travel funds are sufficient and are available and used effectively by all members of the section. All positions in the section are Polish-language designated, but language ability among the officers varies greatly. This does not seem to hinder the development of host-country contacts, as access to officials in the host government, nongovernmental organizations, and the business community appears to be good and at the appropriate level. The MPP was coordinated by an officer in the political section who also drafted portions of several of the goals. A substantial amount of the section's efforts, about 20 percent, is spent preparing for and escorting official visitors to Poland.

Labor Affairs

Since the 1989 fall of the communist government, and increasingly since Poland joined the EU in 2004, the nation's organized labor movement, including Solidarity, has lost influence and membership and is no longer a force in politics. Former labor and Solidarity movement activists have joined or created political parties and are active in domestic politics.

In June 2006, following the departure of the deputy counselor and the abolishment of that position, the labor officer will take over responsibility for following and reporting on nearly all of Poland's internal politics. Thus, it is appropriate to redesignate and retain this important position. However, the OIG team suggested the preparation of a regular (annual or biannual) report on the labor movement in Poland and its influence in the political arena.

Recommendation 1: The Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, in coordination with the Bureau of Human Resources, should approve Embassy Warsaw's request (06 Warsaw 845) and change the designation of position 12124000 from labor officer to political officer. (EUR, in coordination with DGHR)

There is great concern in the embassy's executive office and political section about a possible second Diplomatic Readiness Initiative staff reduction abolishing the labor officer position, although the incumbent officer devotes nearly all of his time to internal political issues. The OIG team believes that the redesignated position should not be abolished, as it is of significant importance to the section's functions.

Political-Military Affairs

The political counselor and the two political-military officers do an excellent job of coordinating political-military policy implementation and activities with the DAO and ODC. This coordination is especially important in view of Poland's strong support of the United States and the breadth of the political-military relationship. Poland maintains over 900 troops in Iraq and is also present in Afghanistan, where it is prepared to participate in 2007 in a composite command of the NATO International Security Assistance Force. Poland is campaigning hard to become the home for a possible future U.S. missile defense installation.

Counterterrorism Coordination

The political section coordinates the mission's counterterrorism efforts. One officer is designated as the reporting officer for that subject and also coordinates the Joint Counter-Terrorism Working Group, a bilateral coordinating group with the Polish government that meets several times a year. An economic section officer is designated to report on terrorism finance.

Holocaust Issues

The embassy team, particularly the Ambassador, the political section, PAS, and Consulate General Krakow, is active in addressing Holocaust-related issues. The political section and Consulate General Krakow work closely and are in frequent communication with the Department's Office of Holocaust Affairs and are in regular contact with members of the Jewish-American community and various nongovernmental organizations whose work promotes U.S. policy objectives on tolerance and combating racism and anti-Semitism.

ECONOMIC SECTION

The economic section has impressively advocated for U.S. companies doing business or intending to do business in Poland, and its cable reporting is adequate. The section will have a critical staffing gap for one year, starting in July 2006, due to curtailment by the trade policy officer to take an assignment to Kabul, Afghanistan. The rotational ELO in the section devotes about half of his time to environment, science, technology, and health affairs.

The economic counselor devotes a considerable amount of time to advocate for U.S. companies. Addressing bureaucratic red tape and a poorly functioning court system are areas where the embassy's advocacy effectively supports U.S. private investment in Poland. Due to a vacancy in the Commercial Service (CS) office in Warsaw, the economic section has taken on a larger share of business advocacy. With the arrival of a new senior commercial officer during the summer of 2006 some of the advocacy responsibilities should devolve to the Commercial Service. The section has also had success in addressing government procedures or practices that detract from Poland's investment climate.

Several Washington readers commented that economic reporting, especially regarding macroeconomics and the economy in general, was insufficient. The OIG team's review of the cable reports indicates that the number and quality of reports have been adequate. Cables are concise, well organized, and informative. However, additional analytical reporting, especially macroeconomic analysis, would be well received in Washington.

At the time of the inspection, the section consisted of the counselor, two mid-level officers, a rotational ELO, and an office management specialist. Three LES perform analysis, draft cables and letters, and provide administrative support. The officer in the trade position who curtailed has had a successor named, but there will be a one-year gap starting in July 2006 while that successor has language training. In this lean section, the one-year gap will create management challenges for the counselor in prioritizing the section's work and covering for the vacancy.

Communication opportunities within the section include three staff meetings a week, and the entire American and Polish staff attend. Representation and travel funds are sufficient; all members of the section, including LES, can and do use these funds. All positions in the section are Polish-language designated, but language ability among the officers varies greatly and is considered an impediment to performing their tasks effectively. Despite the language difficulty, the section has developed a good number of well-placed contacts in the Polish government and parliament. Section officers prepared the MPP goal on trade and investment and participated in the preparation of several others.

Support provided by the section for official visitors is comprehensive and considered excellent by the visitors and their home agencies in Washington. Most officers in the section participate in PAS outreach programs by giving speeches, often in Polish. The section briefs a large number of official and business visitors.

Environment, Science, Technology, and Health

The economic section's rotational ELO spends about half his time on environment, science, technology, and health affairs issues. There is a regular flow of official U.S. science community visitors, but most come for highly technical discussions or conferences, rather than on topics of general interest. The most active U.S.-Polish discussions are on climate change, the funding of science in Poland, and possibilities for scientific and health cooperation.

In February 2006, the United States and Poland signed a bilateral Science and Technology Agreement. The agreement had languished since 2002 over text regard-

ing tax issues. Using the Polish president's first trip to Washington later that month as leverage, the economic counselor found language that sidestepped the issue and allowed the agreement to be signed.

The potential for an Avian Influenza (bird flu) outbreak has also received substantial attention. A comprehensive report was prepared by the economic section, in coordination with the regional medical officer and the agricultural affairs officer from the Foreign Agricultural Service. The report outlined Poland's (and the embassy's) preparations and ability to deal with an outbreak and a possible pandemic.

TRADE PROMOTION

The embassy and Consulate General Krakow make a strong effort to promote U.S. exports. The Department of Commerce maintains a two-officer and 12-local staff Commercial Service section to promote U.S. exports. The section also covers Lithuania and may soon be assigned additional regional responsibilities. The Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) has two officers and five LES and also covers Lithuania. It too may soon be assigned additional regional responsibilities. Although FAS promotes U.S. agricultural product exports, its primary focus now is on commodity reporting and agricultural trade policy issues. The Ambassador, DCM, and other senior embassy officers work closely with CS and FAS on trade promotion. The CS and FAS counselors are members of the country team and have ready access to the embassy's senior leadership.

Embassy officers work quite closely with the American Chamber of Commerce in Warsaw (AmCham). The AmCham is effectively used to discover "doing business" problems and to develop possible solutions. Officers in the economic section are active participants in various AmCham committees, particularly on intellectual property rights issues.

The consul general in Krakow also promotes the importation of U.S. products and actively advocates on behalf of U.S. companies in that district. The consul general helped establish a branch of the AmCham in Krakow and works closely with the AmCham branch in Wroclaw, which is part of his consular district.

CONSULATE GENERAL KRAKOW

The consul general in Krakow also has developed a Political and Economic Priorities and Reporting Plan for the year. The political reporting and some of the economic reporting is done by the ELO in the political/economic section, and the principal officer contributes mostly economic reporting. The quality and quantity of cable reporting is substantial, given the few reporting officers and the fact that the political/economic junior officer devotes more than half her time to official visitors. The reporting officers frequently provide input to the political and economic sections at the embassy, and this is incorporated into their formal and informal reporting. Consulate General Krakow's reporting plan also includes individual projects for each ELO in the consular section. This well-received training/development program is designed to require two to four hours per week from each officer and to result in an analytical cable.

A mid-level reporting officer has been assigned to the consulate and is expected to arrive in the autumn of 2006. Currently supported by one economic/political LES member, staffing for economic and political activities is appropriate to the consulate's needs.

LAW ENFORCEMENT COORDINATION

Law enforcement agencies represented at the embassy include the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The Drug Enforcement Administration will open an office in the summer of 2006.

A biweekly law enforcement meeting is chaired by the Ambassador. The law enforcement agencies present at post are invited to the meeting, as are representatives from the regional security office and consular section. The Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement's representatives do not usually attend, due to the press of their work and their location outside of Warsaw at the international airport. Coordination between these law enforcement entities is effective, and the regional security office is integrated as appropriate. The OIG team informally recommended that this biweekly meeting be renamed the law enforcement working group and that, in the absence of the Ambassador, it be chaired by the DCM. A representative of the political section should be included in the meeting, which could also address the consular section's Visas Viper requirements.

PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

Management and Resources

The OIG team found public diplomacy is a high-priority, active mission effort. The public affairs officer ably manages the embassy PAS, which includes four mid-level officers, a rotational officer, and 17 LES. The embassy and Consulate General Krakow work well together. PAS American officers and LES employees are analytic, hardworking, and have extensive contacts.

The public affairs officer (PAO) is a member of the country team and participates in the development of the MPP. The PAO acknowledged that he must slow down his outreach efforts when he loses the assistant cultural affairs officer position in summer 2007 due to the Global Diplomatic Repositioning Initiative. Strategic planning documents help manage such losses. The OIG team counseled the PAO to work with the embassy front office to develop a document that has achievable, measurable, and strategically directed goals to ensure embassy priorities are met.

PAS's initial FY 2006 allotment was \$1.7 million, and as of May 2006 it had received \$55,000 for unfunded priorities. The PAO in Warsaw shares his budget with the PAO in Krakow, who is satisfied with the budget's division. PAS Poland this year hosted the regular PAO coordination meeting among neighboring countries, which resulted in the sharing of speakers and other resources.

The Ambassador enthusiastically supports PAS programming and is a major public diplomacy resource. He speaks at and frequently hosts PAS events at his home and regularly attends Fulbright Commission meetings. He continually monitors the embassy web site and has initiated a monthly embassy electronic newsletter.

The PAO said he has sufficient funds for his ambitious agenda, but the OIG team observed that PAS has had to overcome program infrastructure weaknesses to carry that mission out. PAS must hold large, public events in the chancery's main lobby, which is open to foot traffic. PAS officers rely on the hospitable Ambassador and DCM to host medium to large representational events.

PAS maintains excellent files on its grants and carefully follows post procedures. According to these procedures, the sequence at Embassy Warsaw for signing grants has been for the grants officer to sign and then the grantee signs. Next, the budget and fiscal officer certifies the availability of funds. Both parties should not sign grants before there is a commitment to fund the program – even if PAS has a good

sense of the availability of funds due to its cuff accounts. According to the Department's Office of the Procurement Executive, Federal Assistance Program Division and 4 FAH-3 H-134.1, the budget and fiscal officer should authorize funds before the grantee signs a grant. The current sequence of signatures is a violation of the Anti-Deficiency Act.

Recommendation 2: Embassy Warsaw should issue guidance to the public affairs section, advising it of Department policy requiring that the budget and fiscal officer first certify the availability of funds before the grantee signs a grant. (Action: Embassy Warsaw)

Media Section

The OIG team found that the PAS's information section cooperates smoothly with sections throughout the embassy. It worked closely with the political section, ODC, and DAO to manage coverage of Poland's purchase of F-16 fighter aircraft and cooperated closely with the consular section to successfully ease heavy Polish media criticism of the U.S. visa policy. The Commercial Service praised the PAS media support of its visiting officials and trade delegations.

The information section has wide media contacts and a good placement record. The Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research's Office of Media Reaction praised the section's media reaction reports. The section also drafts reporting cables on Polish media and politics. Polish journalists regularly participate in PAS programs, including journalism training. The PAS at Consulate General Krakow holds Partnership for Democracy workshops that support joint U.S.-Polish-Ukrainian journalism training and exchange.

American Information Resource Centers

The assistant information officer manages the embassy's American Information Resource Center (AIRC) and acts as the AIRC's gatekeeper for U.S. government, mission, and public information that is used to update the embassy web site. Embassy Warsaw works as a team with Consulate General Krakow's AIRC, which has parallel responsibilities. The regional information resource officer visits regularly and provides good support.

The mission's two AIRCs have an innovative, technologically advanced electronic outreach team. The Warsaw AIRC's staff of three maintains the embassy web site. Consulate General Krakow's AIRC web master and assistant maintain the consulate general's web site. PAS supports Polish- and English-language mirror web

sites. Both AIRCs package innovative outreach materials with handsome graphics to compete in the increasingly sophisticated Polish media market. The embassy's AIRC is placing on the embassy web site a streaming video about visa procedures, and it plans to develop another video on U.S.-Polish military relations. The AIRC also creates high-quality posters for PAS programs and other materials.

Both AIRCs' annual plans contain strong MPP direction. For instance, security cooperation is a major MPP goal. Both AIRCs have good contacts among Polish military libraries. The Warsaw PAS is financing the logistics of the donation of the \$1 million worth of archives from the U.S. Air Force Europe's Warrior Preparation Center in Kaiserslautern to Poland's National Defense Academy Library. The AIRC's bibliographies on its web site include those on military, counterterrorism, and political-military subjects. During the inspection, the Warsaw AIRC director met with librarians from the Polish counterpart to the National Security Council, briefing them on embassy resources.

The Warsaw AIRC is charged with supporting Poland's first American Corners, which is in Lodz, Poland's second largest city. Consulate General Krakow will support Poland's second American Corner, which will open in June in Wroclaw, a booming city in western Poland. Embassy Warsaw's AIRC receives regular activity reports from Lodz.

PAS should more carefully direct its human resources to maintaining the AIRC's technological edge. An AIRC employee is redesigning the consular section's pages on the embassy web site, a major project that has lasted one and one-half months and will require an additional estimated three to four months of tedious clerical work. This employee cannot carry out PAS outreach initiatives during that time. PAS should hire an outside contractor or eligible family member to do this work and similar future projects, allowing the AIRC staff to focus on core duties.

Recommendation 3: Embassy Warsaw should hire an outside contractor or eligible family member to finish the update of the consular section's pages on the embassy web site. (Action: Embassy Warsaw)

The embassy web site chronicles the Ambassador's activities, often with daily updates and usually with photos taken in the front office by the PAS audio-visual technician, who must have an American officer as escort. The technician's talents would be better used if he were working with the AIRC on planned video streaming and other media projects. The Ambassador's staff assistant could take the photographs and provide appropriate captions, including the names of visitors, to PAS for the web site. Then, the audio-visual technician could direct his talents to other tasks.

The OIG team informally recommended the embassy assign the Ambassador's assistant to take these photos.

The embassy AIRC's director is talented in computer design, and the AIRC Annual Plan specifies that the AIRC will do graphic design and printing for PAS initiatives and at the front office's request. The AIRC has also begun to carry out requests from other sections, although projects coming from outside of the annual plan take time from his AIRC work, and the requesting section should be out-sourcing such work. The OIG team informally recommended that he avoid requests for graphic design and printing that come from outside of the AIRC Annual Plan.

Cultural Section

The cultural section handles a full range of programs, including traditional cultural programs such as performing and visual arts, literary events, and cultural festivals. Some model exchange and speakers programs are well branded and blanket the country, and several representational events are said to have effectively enhanced Polish views of the embassy.

The section's speaker's bureau contacts schools and universities throughout Poland to arrange embassy officers' speeches – nearly half of which are made in Polish. PAS's America Presents program sends speakers and cultural performers to major- and medium-size cities. PAS also invites students into the embassy through its Meet America program, explaining American society and how an embassy functions. A PAS officer has developed expertise to speak on issues of American Muslim life for presentations in Poland and elsewhere in cooperation with embassies in neighboring countries.

The PAS International Visitor Leadership Program has full mission participation and targets MPP priority issues. The DCM chairs the meeting to select candidates. The embassy sends approximately 40 professional, well-briefed candidates annually and provides good follow-up information to Washington. It stays in contact with program alumni through continuing representational and program events.

The cultural section also works effectively with the political section on programs addressing tolerance of diversity, Holocaust issues, and trafficking in persons.

Fulbright Program

The U.S.-Poland Fulbright Commission is well run and has good embassy rapport. It is the largest Fulbright Program in central Europe with FY 2005 U.S. contri-

butions of \$1.5 million and Polish contributions, primarily contributions in kind, of \$123,000. Approximately 68 Polish and U.S. students, scholars, and teachers participate in the programs annually, and the mission includes them in its activities. The Fulbright alumni association is active.

The embassy and Fulbright Commission are renegotiating the bilateral agreement with the Polish government so that Poland will begin matching U.S. financial contributions. The Polish government's changes and reticence has resulted in three years of negotiation but little progress. The OIG team explained to the PAO the usefulness of providing a regular, short progress report to the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

The Fulbright Commission's U.S. educational advisor cooperates well with the embassy to maintain the interest of Polish students in pursuing U.S. education – particularly in light of aggressive recruitment by the EU, Australia, and other countries. The commission's educational adviser carries out programs in Warsaw and cooperates with educational advisers throughout Poland. Mission consular officers support the educational advising network's efforts and PAS's broad public diplomacy outreach to explain student visa procedures and exchange opportunities.

PAS also now plans to use English-teaching to foster interest in American culture and exchanges. In 2007, for the first time in years, the Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs has agreed to provide Poland with an English Language Fellow.

Alumni and Institutional Contacts

PAS has a concrete plan to develop its own alumni initiative, which will include participants in the International Visitor Leadership, Fulbright, Voluntary Visitors, and Lane Kirkland Scholarships programs. During the inspection, PAS held an alumni reception to develop an alumni leadership core group. PAS also has announced an alumni grants program to stimulate interest.

PAS has an equally thoughtful plan to follow up among the nongovernmental organizations that received grants in democracy promotion through the embassy's Democracy Commission. This program used Support for East European Democracy Act funds, although that program ended in 2004 when Poland entered the EU. The embassy is developing a national-level approach, including use of a national awards program, a possible major commemorative reception, or PAS grants.

Consulate General Krakow

The PAO at Consulate General Krakow successfully manages its PAS section of five LES and conducts an active and effective program of educational, cultural, press, and information activities. The section's LES staff is hard working, creative, and work very smoothly with their embassy counterparts. Their innovative *Zoom in on America* electronic English-teaching newsletter supports PAS's new thrust into that area. Consulate General Krakow's program activities are efficiently organized and well attended. The consul general provides effective guidance and oversight without engaging in micromanagement.

CONSULAR AFFAIRS

For almost four centuries, starting with the arrival of Polish glassblowers in Jamestown, VA, in 1608, Poles have traveled to the United States in search of economic opportunity, political freedom, or a better life. In FY 2005, almost 130,000 Poles received visas for the United States, either as temporary visitors or permanent residents. Over 40,000 Americans, many with dual nationality, visit or live in Poland and several thousand noncitizen U.S. retirees have returned to their homeland and receive U.S. government pensions. The long-standing and complex nature of these people-to-people ties makes consular issues a very visible part of the bilateral relationship.

Embassy Warsaw, Consulate General Krakow, and Consular Agency Poznan manage a range of issues that include parental child abduction, Social Security retirement, disability pensions, and access to NIVs. The strong desire of the previous Polish president to have Poland included in the visa waiver program led to the creation of a visa road map process aimed at guiding the country's eventual entry into the program.

Embassy Warsaw provides the full range of consular services, including NIVs, immigrant visas, ACS, and federal benefits. Consulate General Krakow offers the same range of nonimmigrant and American citizens services, but does not process immigrant visa applications. The consular agency in Poznan provides applications for and information on ACS, which are then completed in Warsaw. To help meet the increasing demands on the embassy's consular section, the Department funded a \$2.2 million expansion of the consular workspace.

Warsaw's consular section is integrated into the embassy's overall operations. The MPP contains extensive sections that detail consular objectives and strategies. The consul general regularly attends all the country team meetings and is a member of the mission's emergency action committee. The consul general has a weekly one-on-one meeting with the Ambassador and participates in a biweekly law enforcement meeting. The Ambassador's heavy schedule, however, means these meetings do not always occur on a regular basis. The OIG team suggested that when the Ambassador is absent the DCM should act in his stead. Despite the irregular nature of the meetings, the consul general said she feels comfortable contacting the front office whenever a consular issue needs to be discussed. The consular section provides the coordinator for the monthly Visas Viper committee discussion. Although there are

no scheduled face-to-face meetings, the coordinator calls or e-mails each member of the committee to discuss issues or submissions prior to sending a cable. The OIG team discussed with the DCM how he could take a more active role in the committee's deliberations.

CONSULAR MANAGEMENT

The consul general has countrywide supervisory responsibilities and is a decisive and empowering senior FE-OC consular manager. She presides over a large section that has 16 Foreign Service officers (FSO), two eligible family members, and 42 LES. The staff is divided among six units: NIV, immigrant visas, ACS, federal benefits, fraud prevention unit, and public liaison (PLU). A consular management assistance team visited Poland in the fall of 2005. In accordance with one of the team's recommendations, the section reprogrammed the NIV unit chief's position from FSO-2 to FSO-1 and designated that position as the consul general's deputy, downgrading the position of the chief of the immigrant visa unit from FSO-1 to FSO-2 to reflect the decrease in immigrant visa workload.

Communication within the section and between the two posts is very good. The consul general's weekly unit chiefs' meeting includes Consulate General Krakow's consular section chief via telephone. The consul general follows that up by meeting with the senior LES in the consular section and then finishes with a meeting of all American officers. At different times and days, the FSO unit chiefs meet with their senior LES employees, who in turn have a meeting with the rest of the local staff in their units. This allows for a free and easy flow of information downward within the various units. To improve the information flow upwards, the OIG team suggested that the unit chiefs broaden their weekly meetings once a month to include all Americans and LES in their units. In addition, to make communication across units even better, the OIG team suggested quarterly or semi-annual section-wide gatherings with the American and LES staff.

The section has a formal orientation program for all newly arrived officers. The consul general, in consultation with the unit chiefs, assigns every ELO additional responsibilities or portfolios. The consul general also manages a formal rotation system within the consular section that allows every ELO to spend some time in all the section's units.

The senior consular managers all understand the importance of training programs for the local staff. The responsibility for coordinating training activities has traditionally been assigned to one of the unit chiefs. Under their energetic direction,

all LES are taking or have completed at least one of the online consular correspondence courses. The training officer also monitors all Foreign Service Institute-sponsored training, working with the consul general and other unit chiefs to nominate qualified candidates. To increase the opportunities for training and cross-fertilization among LES in the region, the OIG team suggested they add an LES component to their annual FSO-oriented consular conference.

CONSULAR SPACE

The consular section is split between two wings of the embassy building and scattered around two floors of one of the wings. There are also more officers in the NIV unit than there are interview windows. As a result, the unit must often commandeer additional interview windows in the immigrant visa unit. In an effort to overcome these and other problems, the embassy proposed a major consular expansion project that would increase the size of the NIV waiting room by over 150 percent and increase the size of the workspace by approximately 40 percent.

Under the consular improvement initiative, the embassy received \$2.2 million to fund this project. Embassy Warsaw's consular expansion project is said to be the largest project funded by the improvement initiative that is still outstanding. The initial date to begin construction was the winter of 2005. When the OIG team arrived in Warsaw in May 2006, the start date for the project had been moved tentatively to the fall of 2006.

The OIG team believes the expansion project is too complex to be left to post management. The OIG team also understands that the OBO office that supervises the facilities maintenance specialist has informed Embassy Warsaw that the specialist should not serve as the project's contracting officer's representative or project director. That Washington OBO office also recommended that other offices in OBO would be better placed to take over those responsibilities. To kick-start this project, get its design approvals, and start construction before the end of 2006, the OIG team recommends that OBO appoint a project director from Washington to coordinate all aspects of the expansion project with the embassy and the concerned OBO offices.

Recommendation 4: The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations should appoint a project director for Embassy Warsaw's consular expansion project. (Action: OBO)

Recommendation 5: The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations should set a time line for completion of the Embassy Warsaw's consular expansion project. (Action: OBO)

VISA SERVICES

Nonimmigrant Visa Processing

The current chief of Warsaw's NIV unit is a highly organized and knowledgeable FSO-1 consular officer. She supervises a staff of eight FSOs and 16 LES, who processed slightly over 90,000 visa applicants in FY 2005, with a refusal rate of 19 percent. Although there are eight officers available for applicant interviewing, the unit only has five interview windows. In addition, the insufficient number of windows requires that NIV intake and data editing take place in a small anteroom located one floor above the NIV waiting room at the entrance to the consular section. The LES doing intake do not sit behind windows but work at regular desks, dealing directly with the public.

The unit chief carefully tracks total appointments, length of interviews, and the total time applicants spend in the consular section in order to determine when it is appropriate to add additional LES at the intake and when to use additional windows in the immigrant visa unit for interviewing. She employs a sophisticated set of spreadsheets that allow her to track each of those variables and make such determinations. She also instituted a staggered appointment system that allows the call center to schedule people on the half hour throughout the interview day, rather than bringing in large numbers of applicants at one or two times each day.

The NIV unit chief has sought to create a common approach to adjudication of visas among her interviewing officers. Through regularly scheduled discussions with her line officers, she forged a consensus around a fact-based approach to adjudications, successfully discouraging officers from indulging in unsupportable musings on applicant intent.

The NIV unit returns passports via a cash-on-delivery courier pass-back system. A few weeks before the start of the inspection, the unit switched to using an online courier receipt and a bar code for identification. This change allowed the unit to eliminate the courier company's desk in the waiting area, which had always been a choke point. The NIV chief said a fair number, 40 to 50 percent, of NIV applicants were already presenting courier receipts that they had completed online.

Embassy Warsaw and Consulate General Krakow worked together to develop the mission's referral policy. The policy, which was issued under the Ambassador's signature, is posted on the consular section web site. The OIG team advised the consul general to amend the policy to state more clearly that an applicant who had been previously refused a visa could not qualify for an "A" referral. The OIG team discussed with the DCM the importance of reviewing the consul general's adjudications of "A" referrals.

Immigrant Visa Processing

Warsaw is an efficient regional immigrant visa center, processing immigrant visa applicants for Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and Belarus. It also processes Diversity Visa applicants from the Ukraine, although Embassy Kiev now handles all the remaining immigrant visa and fiancé visa applications. In FY 2005, more than 19,000 applicants passed through the unit's waiting room, with approximately 55 percent coming from Poland. The immigrant visa unit also accepts and approves immediate-relative petitions for spouses and children filed by American citizens. The wait, from petition filing to visa interview, is less than one month.

An expert, hands-on FSO-2 consular manager provides disciplined and energetic supervision of the unit. The officer also acts as the consular section's fraud prevention manager (FPM) and supervises the PLU. The immigrant visa staff consists of four ELOs and 12 LES. The consular section cashier also works out of the unit but is supervised by the accountable consular officer, the ACS unit chief. The unit's staff processes immigrant visa applications quickly while ensuring that the law and regulations are properly followed.

Immigrant visa numbers continue to decline, with 14,654 immigrant visas issued in FY 2004 and 12,261 issued in FY 2005. The OIG team understands that the processing of Ukrainian Diversity Visas, which represent about one-quarter of Embassy Warsaw's current workload, may return to Embassy Kiev in the near future. In addition, the consular sections in Latvia and Lithuania have expressed interest in taking over immigrant visa processing for their nationals. The Bureau of Consular Affairs should review these possibilities to determine whether regionalization of immigrant visa processing in Eastern Europe should continue and what sequence this devolution might involve. Such a review would help Embassy Warsaw decide when and how to reallocate its personnel and physical resources.

Recommendation 6: The Bureau of Consular Affairs, in coordination with Embassy Warsaw, should determine when to continue devolution of immigrant visa processing in order to help Embassy Warsaw plan for reallocation of consular resources. (Action: CA, in coordination with Embassy Warsaw)

AMERICAN CITIZENS SERVICES AND FEDERAL BENEFITS

Warsaw's ACS unit consists of seven dedicated LES. Four provide passport and citizenship as well as protection and welfare services to 24,000 American citizens who reside in or travel through the consular district. The Social Security Administration pays the three other LES to serve over 7,700 Social Security beneficiaries living in Poland, one-third of them Americans, and the 1,000 pensioners in Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic, half of whom are Americans. A service-oriented FSO-3 consular officer supervises the unit, which also includes one ELO.

Approximately 4,000 Americans have registered with the embassy. There are 30 designated wardens who can be used to contact Americans. In addition, the ACS chief sends warden messages electronically to the e-mail addresses or cell phones of registered Americans. Faxes are also used to contact U.S. citizens. The embassy also uses institutions such as hotels, schools, and businesses to transmit messages.

The ACS staff currently monitors three particularly difficult parental kidnapping cases that fall under the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction. During the inspection the ACS chief attended a court hearing on a possible fourth Hague case.

Poland's inability to resolve Hague cases has caused the Department's Office of Children's Issues to label Poland a "country of concern." Embassy Warsaw believes the problem lies with law enforcement rather than the judiciary. The OIG team found that cooperation with the Polish central authority had improved and judges, with the active involvement of the central authority, were handing down orders in nine months or less, rather than two years as previously reported. Polish law, however, does not view parental kidnapping as a criminal offense as long as the parent has not been entirely stripped of custody rights. With the active help of the Ambassador and DCM, the embassy has begun lobbying the Ministry of Justice to write new legislation.

The OIG team discussed with the DCM and CG the possibility of following two tracks on familiarizing Polish authorities with the details of Hague Convention rules. Although there are too many judges at the local level, the OIG team pointed out that, at the appeals level, there may be some senior judges of the family division courts who could be identified for training. In addition, the OIG team suggested that the two officers identify legislators or staffers who might shepherd legislation through the Poland's Parliament and send them to the United States for training via the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs' International Visitor Leadership Program.

Regarding Warsaw and Krakow's recent installation of the new ACS software, ACS Plus, staff members at both posts said the project is a work in progress and that they were looking forward to the release of the improved version of the software in the fall of 2006. Both sets of employees said they could not transfer cases between posts or to Washington. LES in Warsaw and Krakow complained about unpredictable shut downs of the software and loss of data in mid-entry. The Warsaw LES employees complained about losing all entered data when they go back to previous screens to correct an entry and mentioned difficulties with moving previously entered information to the software that records registered Americans. Consulate General Krakow's LES who supervises the warden system noted that, unlike the old software, ACS Plus does not have a program for printing labels or doing mass mailings.

PUBLIC LIAISON SUBUNIT

The PLU is collocated with the immigrant visa unit, and the same officer supervises both units. The PLU staff has an ELO, who has additional responsibilities in other units, and nine LES. The unit is responsible for managing public inquiries, revising the consular section web site, and providing interpreters, primarily for applicants from Ukraine.

Inquiries to the PLU are channeled to one of three electronic mailboxes: a visa mailbox for congressional offices; a public mailbox for general inquiries, including questions about visa processing and simple ACS or federal benefits queries; and a fiancé mailbox for applicants seeking this type of visa. An interim response is automatically sent when any of the mailboxes receives an initial e-mail. Questions received from Congress are answered within four days. Full replies to inquiries from the general public are sent within eight to ten days. Depending on the complexity of the issue, the PLU's ELO or an officer from the pertinent unit may clear the

response before it is sent. An LES in the PLU answers inquiries face-to-face from a booth that faces the street. The PLU is customer-service oriented and concerned with transmitting quick, accurate replies.

FRAUD PREVENTION

The consular section does not have a full-time FPM. The designated FPM is the immigrant visa unit chief, who already supervises two other units. Although an ELO is regularly assigned to the unit, the officer is only there part-time, generally appearing when NIV interviews are finished for the day. The fraud prevention unit also has two highly experienced and dedicated LES investigators. The senior LES has long experience with local immigration issues, having served as a border guard before joining the consular section.

The OIG team recommends the embassy establish a full-time FPM position to oversee anti-fraud efforts in the region and in Poland and provide closer, more consistent supervision of the LES. With a full time FPM, the section would be able to carry out the Consular Management Assistance Team's recommendation in 2005 that it "carefully track fraud investigations and get a better handle on the overall success of its fraud prevention efforts." The officer would report directly to the consul general and could act as the chief point of contact for the Department of Homeland Security inspectors at Warsaw's international airport, who conduct pre-clearance checks on passengers. Finally, the FPM could also be responsible for working with the Department of Homeland Security and the Polish government on visa road map issues, such as base line validity studies, illegal employment in the United States, and designing more secure travel documents.

Given the personnel constraints faced by the consular section, the OIG team believes there are three possible alternatives to providing it with an FPM. They are:

- reprogramming an existing ELO position in the consular section to create the FSO-3 FPM position, or
- requesting an additional American position, or
- working in conjunction with Poland's FY 2007 exit from the Diversity Visa program to announce the return of Ukrainian diversity visa processing to Embassy Kiev in FY 2008. Since Ukraine diversity visas account for about 25 percent of Embassy Warsaw's overall workload, this would allow reprogramming of one immigrant visa ELO position in FY 2007 to create the FPM, even if Poland returns to the Diversity Visa program the following year.

Recommendation 7: Embassy Warsaw, in coordination with the Bureau of Consular Affairs and Human Resources, should establish a full-time, mid-level fraud prevention manager position. (Action: Embassy Warsaw, in coordination with CA and DGHR)

VISA ROAD MAPS AND THE IMMIGRATION ADVISORY PROGRAM

The previous president of Poland lobbied hard at very senior levels to have Poland included in the visa waiver program. Having an NIV refusal rate of below three percent during the previous fiscal year is required by Section 212(c)(2)(A)(ii) of the Immigration and Nationality Act for eligibility for the program. Poland had not achieved this rate. In reaction to his strong appeals, however, the United States devised the visa road map that delineates the steps a country should take to meet the criteria for participation in the visa waiver program. Although Poland was the first to have a road map, there are now 13 countries in Europe and Asia engaged in road map negotiations, and even more are talking with bilateral consular working groups at U.S. embassies about immigration-related issues

With the rapid expansion in the number of road map countries and bilateral consular working groups, Embassy Warsaw may need more consistent monitoring from Washington. The Department of Homeland Security has the lead regarding the designation of countries that are eligible for the visa waiver program and on the road map process in general, but CA has responsibility for providing guidance on the formation of bilateral consular working groups. Although the Department has sent several cables of instructions to the posts involved, the OIG team found that Embassy Warsaw's instructions lacked the specificity that the embassy said it needs on such issues as which points to raise with Polish officials in bilateral working groups regarding secure travel documents or the conduct of baseline studies of overstay rates.

As part of its immigration advisory program (IAP), DHS in September 2004 assigned five inspectors to do pre-clearance checks at Warsaw's international airport. The agency's goal is to lower the number of people refused entry at U.S. airports by reviewing their status before they board the plane. The Department of Homeland Security inspectors have no formal enforcement authority and can only advise passengers about any possible ineligibility. The program was an instant public relations

success in Poland. An unintended byproduct of that effort was the close cooperation between the IAP and the consular section on a whole range of border security issues.

The recent reduction in the number of temporary duty IAP inspectors from five to three badly affected that cooperation. IAP officers now can no longer attend embassy or consular section meetings. Visa applicant name check information, which IAP officers used to send routinely, is now much more difficult for them to complete in a timely manner; except in emergencies, such information is only returned on an ad hoc basis. IAP training of airport officials, border guards, and consular officers used to be routine, but can now only be irregularly scheduled.

Consular Services - Consular Agency Poznan

The consular agent in Poznan provides ACS information and forms to American citizens residing in the city and provides visa information to interested Polish travelers. The services offered include accepting applications for passports, reports of birth, and Social Security numbers. The agent also provides protection and welfare services to U.S. citizens, regularly visiting jailed Americans and assisting citizens who are destitute or have had their money stolen. The OIG team visited the Poznan agency and determined that the agent was exercising appropriate management controls over fee collection and consular receipts. The OIG team performed a random cash verification and found everything in order.

Consular Services – Consulate General Krakow

Consulate General Krakow's consular section has seven American positions and provides the full range of ACS and processes all categories of NIV applications in the consular district. It also has a separate federal benefits unit that successfully serves thousands of pensioners who have returned to Poland. Although the section does not issue immigrant visas, it does accept and approve immigrant petitions, which it forwards to Embassy Warsaw for final processing.

Consular Management

The consular section is managed by an energetic, experienced, hands-on FSO-1 officer. Prior to a Consular Management Assistance Team's visit in the fall of 2005, the remaining six officers were all first- or second-tour ELOs. In accordance with one of the team's recommendations, the consul general reprogrammed one of the consular ELO positions and created an FSO-3 deputy consular section chief

position. An officer of appropriate rank has been assigned and is scheduled to arrive the summer of 2007, after a year of Polish language training. In the NIV unit, there are five full-time NIV interviewing officers and one part-time EFM who drafts correspondence. In accordance with another of the team's recommendations, the most senior interviewing officer, who was recently promoted to FSO-3, is the day-to-day NIV line manager. The ACS unit chief is normally an ELO on a four- or five-month rotation, although during the inspection the chief was another recently promoted FSO-3 officer who was also acting as the section's deputy.

Staff morale is high, and cooperation between the LES and the American officers is excellent. Communication at all levels within the section is good, and the consular section chief is accessible to all his staff. Prior to the inspection, the consular section chief had begun to hold regularly scheduled section meetings to supplement the ad hoc, informal discussions he had previously used to convey information or direction. Although it is difficult to maintain a formal schedule in a busy section, it is important for the consular chief to institutionalize a formal weekly or bi-weekly meeting of all American officers in the section. The OIG team also suggested that the chief consider involving senior LES in such meetings at regular intervals.

Most of the section's LES have at least a decade's worth of consular experience, although a small but significant number of LES have less. The consular section chief has made a concerted effort to nominate his staff for offsite training. Unfortunately, he has not met with much success. The OIG team suggested that he work with the consul general at Embassy Warsaw to set up a schedule for regular offsite training in consular, office, and management skills at the embassy.

Consular Space

The section is located on two floors. The ACS and federal benefits units are on the first floor, and the NIV unit is on the second. Along with the rest of the Consulate General Krakow's physical plant, these consular spaces are woefully inadequate and a dangerous fire hazard. With five officers and only four interview windows, the NIV unit cannot use all of its officer positions for interviews. Even if sufficient space were available to add more windows, there would not be any back office space for the additional staff. Under the creative leadership of the section chief, however, the staff has found ways to move the increasing numbers of people and paper with surprising efficiency. Unfortunately, there is very little physical or bureaucratic room left to improve the process. If the visa workload keeps increasing as it has over the past few years, going from 59,000 in FY 2004 to 65,000 in FY 2005 and probably to more than 70,000 in FY 2006, the section may simply run out of space.

The OIG team informally recommended that the consular section chief look closely at using the two windows used by ACS and the federal benefits unit, which are across the ground-floor courtyard, as NIV intake windows. The two intake windows in the NIV unit could then be used for NIV interviews and additional rows of chairs could be placed in the NIV waiting room. To help Krakow through the peak season, the OIG team also informally recommended that the DCM and the Warsaw consul general treat Poland as one large consular district during the busiest months of the year, allowing applicants to make appointments at either post.

Consulate General Krakow Visa Services

With more than 65,000 NIV applications processed in FY 2005, Consulate General Krakow is among the top five visa-processing posts in Europe. Its refusal rate is 23 percent. Despite the severe limitations of a small, inadequate work area, the NIV staff still manages to process the growing number of visa applicants, who are visiting the consulate general quickly and courteously.

The section chief directly supervises the NIV operation, including reviewing line officers' issuances and refusals. However, the NIV unit chief's responsibilities should be delegated to the section's deputy once that position is formally filled. The section chief would then be free from the daily minutia of managing an NIV unit to devote more time to following trends and considering policies or projects to meet the future demands on the section.

Recommendation 8: Embassy Warsaw should have Consulate General Krakow designate the new FSO-3 consular section deputy as the nonimmigrant visa unit's chief. (Action: Embassy Warsaw)

NIV procedures in Warsaw and Krakow differ in a number of areas, but both posts should make greater efforts to standardize visa procedures in order to bring greater clarity, simplicity, and understanding to the process. The OIG team discussed a number of changes that Krakow could consider implementing, including:

- adopting the embassy's online, bar-coded courier-return system and eliminating the courier company's desk on the first floor, which often acts as a choke point;
- waiving personal appearances for NIV applicants under age 14; and
- de-emphasizing the need for documents at the visa interview.

Recommendation 9: Embassy Warsaw should create standard mission-wide procedures for processing nonimmigrant visa applications, particularly regarding the use of courier pass-back and waiving interviews for applicants under the age of 14. (Action: Embassy Warsaw)

Much of the first floor's public space is unused, particularly in the morning, and the OIG team discussed various methods for using some of that space to create an applicant staging area, which could make for a smoother, faster flow of people into and out of the NIV unit. Inside the NIV unit waiting room, the OIG team suggested moving the Q-matic machine to the NIV entryway. Then, LES staff could pass passports and applications directly to the interviewing officers rather than return them to the applicants. The officers would then also be able to review the application and call up the case from the computer before the applicant appears at the window, shortening interview time.

American Citizens Services/Federal Benefits at Consulate General Krakow

The ACS and federal benefits units provide polite, efficient service to the almost 15,000 American citizens who visit or reside in the Krakow consular district and to 2,000 noncitizen pensioners. The units' LES realize the complementary nature of their respective responsibilities and cooperate fully, sometimes sharing space and equipment.

The ACS unit continues to monitor two long-term child custody cases that fall under the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction and expects a third case to meet Hague Convention criteria soon. The section chief said he believes local authorities are cooperative and that the more difficult or contentious cases are in the embassy's consular district, not in Krakow's district.

The consulate general has 60 wardens to help contact 10,000 registered Americans and, depending on the urgency of the message, uses various combinations of direct paper, electronic notification, and a warden-based cascade system. When the matter is not urgent, wardens are advised that the consulate general will send letters to all citizens who do not have e-mail addresses. If it is urgent, the wardens are asked to contact all those citizens for whom they are responsible. According to the LES staff, the cascade system has only been used two or three times in the past five years, most notably on September 11, 2001. Because the consulate general had never had a representational event for its wardens, the OIG team informally recommended it organize a reception for them and the Ambassador and use the reception to thank them for their years of assistance.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

<i>Agency/Funding Source</i>	U.S. Direct-Hire Staff Positions	U.S. Local-Hire Staff Positions	Locally Employed Staff Positions	Total Staff (Positions) FY 2006	Total Funding FY 2005	Total Funding FY 2006
State Department Diplomatic & Consular Programs	73	8	65	146	5,372,175	5,125,100
ICASS	10	11	184	205	10,488,400	10,157,700
Public Diplomacy	6		22	28	1,736,250	1,720,200
Diplomatic Security	3		48	51	847,149	639,750
Marine guards	9		5	14	191,780	178,750
Representation	-				83,900	78,600
OBO	-				5,272,926	1,970,205
Consular/ MRV/ DV	4	3	15	22	659,353	820,290
Security Upgrade Project	2			2	67,200	34,300
Security Supplemental	2	1	22	25	774,291	567,041
Foreign Commercial Service	3		13	16	917,614	474,869
Foreign Agriculture Service	2		5	7	346,738	386,050
Defense Attaché Office	12		3	15	741,585	608,370
Total	126	23	382	531	\$27,499,361	\$22,761,225

Note: In FY 2005, the U.S. government allocated an estimated \$139.7 million in assistance to Poland, including

- \$3.28 million in democratic reform programs;
- \$0.02 million in economic reform programs; and
- \$136.35 million in security, regional stability, and law enforcement programs.¹

¹ Report on U.S. Government Assistance to Eastern Europe under the Support for East European Democracy Act – FY – 2005, released by the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, January 2006.

RIGHTSIZING

Embassy Warsaw has placed considerable emphasis on rightsizing. In FY 2005 and FY 2006, for example, its entire char force was terminated through reduction in force procedures, and janitorial services were out-sourced. Annual savings are estimated to be about \$80,000 a year. Budget cuts require further reductions; however, they can only be made in areas where discretionary funding exists – about six to seven percent of the total budget for International Cooperative Administrative Support Services (ICASS). These include reducing travel and overtime costs and delaying the staffing of vacant positions. The opportunity to reduce LES support positions is severely limited, however. The number of U.S. personnel serving in other agencies is expected to increase by as many as 15 U.S. direct-hire employees between 2006 and 2008.

Although overall U.S. direct hires are increasing, three U.S. Department direct-hire positions at Embassy Warsaw are being abolished as part of the Global Diplomatic Repositioning Initiative. The RSO position at Consulate General Krakow is also being abolished.

REAL PROPERTY

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Roughly five years ago, the OIG team recommended that the post replace its current facilities with a structure that meets DS standards. The inaction of previous post and OBO managers has let slip opportunities to lease other more suitable facilities, which is why the consulate general’s personnel have remained in unacceptable facilities and may be there for several more years.

After a fruitless search to lease a new office building, OBO determined that the most viable option is to construct a new consulate compound. OBO plans to begin construction of a new facility in 2008, with project completion scheduled for within two years. At the time of the inspection, OBO and the consulate general's leadership were working together to secure option agreements on two potential compound sites. The Rakowicka site has an asking price of \$17 million and is close to the city center and rail station. It is the most desirable option. However, the high land cost and large differences between the market values of the seller and OBO's appraisals have hampered negotiations. OBO plans to conduct a third appraisal to determine whether the market values in the first two appraisals are accurate.

The Motorola site, an alternative site, also meets DS standards, but no progress has been made toward securing an option agreement for this location. Escalating real estate prices and the decreasing supply of well-located vacant lots in Krakow increase the pressure on OBO and the mission to secure land option agreements to ensure that the construction of a new consulate compound is not further delayed or deferred. Construction of a new office building will begin once a site is obtained. Rough estimates place the cost of construction at \$40 million, but the cost could approach about \$60 million by the time the building is ready for operation.

Ownership of the consulate general's short-term-leased buildings has changed after the buildings were returned by the Polish government to their legal owners. The consulate general expects a significant rent increase on the front building, which was returned to its owner in May 2006, an increase similar to one that arose when the back building was returned to its owner in March 2003. The annual lease cost on the back building is \$137,500, whereas the consulate general used to pay a total of \$150,000 to lease both buildings.

Warsaw: The Warsaw chancery and facilities are scheduled for replacement in 2014, but the chancery needs major rehabilitation. In a September 2001 report (01-FP-R-091) OIG highlighted the need to upgrade the chancery's outdated and potentially dangerous electrical system. Fire and electric shock danger arise from the old and mostly unlabeled or improperly labeled wiring. Present conditions are expected to exist until FY 2007 at the earliest. An electrical upgrade project estimated to cost \$7.8 million is planned for the FY 2007-08 time period. A consular section upgrade and expansion project valued at over \$2.2 million is discussed in detail in the Consular Operations section of this report.

ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS

Administrative operations are satisfactory. The performance of some sections and units, such as cashier operations and customs and shipping, and the overall management of the medical unit are excellent and received high scores on OIG's questionnaire. However, the overall operation of the management section and the customer-service orientation of that section received relatively lower scores. To some extent, the lower scores appear to be based on perceptions not performance.

Savings Initiatives

To meet actual and expected budget reductions, Embassy Warsaw initiated several actions, including the elimination of some local-hire positions (the char force) and contracting for services formerly performed inhouse. Estimated savings through FY 2006 are over \$500,000.

Facilities Maintenance

About \$250,000 was spent on routine maintenance and repair of facilities in FY 2005, and another \$207,000 is estimated to be needed for FY 2006. Special maintenance and repair projects cost about \$443,000 in FY 2005, and \$247,000 has been obligated thus far for that purpose for FY 2006. Renovations of the Ambassador's residence and DCM's residence accounted for a considerable portion of the cost. Enclosing the back patio of the Ambassador's residence cost \$207,000. Most of the FY 2005 projects have been completed, but the embassy has not been reporting the completion of the projects as required by OBO. OBO needs this information to maintain effective management of the special maintenance and repair account. The OIG team offered an informal recommendation on the matter.

General Services

General services operations are performed well, largely because of a core group of highly capable, dedicated LES. Property and supply operations for example, are outstanding. The supply supervisor is a member of the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs' (EUR) LES Executive Corps. Considerable effort is made to locate and obtain adequate housing. Consequently, the suitability of housing also scored high on the OIG questionnaire. Procurement and contract files were complete, and their competition and requirements determinations were documented. Motor pool

operations have been cut back to meet reduced budget guidelines. Vehicle maintenance is performed by local garages. At the time of the inspection, the general services office planned to dispose of eight vehicles.

Premium Travel

Controls over premium travel are in place. Embassy Warsaw rarely authorizes business class travel. Between September 23, 2004, and April 26, 2006, 50 travelers leaving Warsaw were authorized to fly business class in accordance with regulations. The Department writes most of the travel orders. The travelers primarily were on permanent change of station orders issued by the Department. Authorizations for business class travel had also been issued by the Department for employees traveling for training and medical evacuation.

Safety

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(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2) The report also said an additional stairway is required, leading from the attic space and basement to the ground level for both buildings. However, these recommendations will be held in abeyance pending construction of a new consulate compound because of the high cost of implementing them and a local prohibition against making structural changes to historic buildings.

Human Resources

The human resources office performs well and operates cohesively. Morale is high, unlike some other sections in the mission. The office serves 149 Americans and 382 LES, including those at Consulate General Krakow. Feedback about customer services was mixed. The office rated above average on OIG's questionnaire and in the ICASS survey, but the office lacks current, written policies and standard operating procedures. However, some procedures have been clearly outlined and effectively implemented. The OIG team made several informal recommendations to improve service and communications.

The office does an excellent job of managing evaluations and work requirements statements for Americans and the local staff. The office notifies the DCM of delinquent reports, and the DCM actively follows up. Some supervisors submitted employee evaluations a month early.

Locally Employed Staff

Many changes have occurred in Poland within the past four years, including the election of a new government and a sizable increase in the cost of living. (b) (2)
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 been minimal, the FSN association explained that many employees do not quit be-
 cause they are vested in the retirement plan. (b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)
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The Compensation Package

The Embassy Warsaw compensation package includes plans for local leave, severance, separation notice, separation for age, life and disability insurance, and death benefits and a social benefits fund. The social benefits fund was established to provide a loan or a grant for emergency situations. The fund helps LES improve their housing or attain other social goals. The mission contributes to the social benefit fund in accordance with Polish labor law. In addition, eligible local staff receives an annual bonus payment from the benefit fund in the amount authorized by board members.

Medical benefits are currently provided through the Polish universal health care system. The regional medical officer and FSN association representatives described this government health care system as inadequate by Polish standards. Many Polish and foreign companies include supplemental health care plans in their compensation packages to address these inadequacies. The mission does not have a supplemental medical plan, but is currently working with the Bureau of Human Resources, Office of Overseas Employment to develop one to support better medical care for the embassy's FSNs.

The LES Handbook is outdated and is being revised. In addition, the policy for LES grievances needs correcting. The present policy limits the final appeal to the

Ambassador. The Office of Civil Rights' LES Discrimination Policy encourages resolution of grievances at post but allows LES to contact the Department. The OIG team informally recommended correcting the post's policy.

The LES Association is moribund, and some employees are unaware it existed. The association on occasion has met with post management but has not provided feedback to its community. The OIG team informally recommended improvements in the association's operations.

Financial Management Operations

The financial management section effectively supports its ICASS users. The section received very good scores on all financial management categories on the OIG questionnaire and received accolades from personnel at the Global Financial Services Center – Charleston. The section is using Department initiatives designed to improve the overall functioning of embassies and consulates worldwide. These initiatives include the paper-check conversion facility, which converts a paper check immediately into an electronic debit in the check writer's account, and real-time processing of financial transactions through direct electronic access to the Department's Regional Financial Management System. This eliminates the former one-to-two-day delay in processing.

International Cooperative Administrative Support Services

The ICASS system is functioning well. Embassy Warsaw provides administrative services to 17 ICASS subscribers, five of them Department entities. All agencies having American direct-hire personnel subscribe to the mandatory basic package. There are no duplicative administrative support services. The ICASS council meets quarterly and monitors compliance with published standards.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND INFORMATION SECURITY

Embassy Warsaw's information management (IM) operation, which consists of the information systems center (ISC) and the information programs center (IPC), provides satisfactory service to its 350 customers and meets most Department IM and security guidelines. The ISC is responsible for the maintenance, security, and

operation of the embassy's unclassified network and for the unclassified overseas dedicated Internet network. The IPC is responsible for the operations, security, and maintenance of the embassy's classified network, telephone and radio communications, the switchboard operator, diplomatic post office, and classified and unclassified pouch. The IM staff has implemented help desk tracking software to manage the workflow in the ISC and IPC, but there are areas within the IM and information security (INFOSEC) programs that need improvement. The OIG team made formal and informal recommendations to address issues such as user awareness, hardware configuration, constituent post support, and mail and pouch usage.

Information Management

The embassy's unclassified network consists of 350 workstations and 18 servers; the classified network has 52 workstations and five servers; and the overseas dedicated Internet has 25 workstations and three servers. Overall the IM sections are well managed and adhere to Department guidelines and industry best practices. This report's classified annex contains a recommendation to address workstation configuration security.

Consulate General Krakow Information Management Concerns

The information management officer plans to make quarterly visits to Consulate General Krakow. This increased oversight will help improve many aspects of IM and INFOSEC associated with Consulate General Krakow's unclassified network; currently, the consulate general has no American technical staff to supervise its three IM LES employees.

To ensure that Consulate General Krakow receives consistent support and oversight from the embassy's IM staff, the OIG team informally recommended that the embassy include Consulate General Krakow's IM support as part of its IM staff's work requirements. Additionally, the OIG team informally recommended that LES in the embassy and at the consulate general be cross-trained on respective information technology systems to foster teamwork and supplement their classroom training. This would allow ISC employees at the embassy and consulate general to be more operationally and technically knowledgeable and able to effectively assist in disaster-recovery efforts in either location.

The consulate general's basement storage area is not as organized as it could be to store computer equipment. (b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)

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Recommendation 10: (b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)
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Diplomatic Mail and Pouch Usage

Embassy Warsaw operates a full-service diplomatic post office and pouch service, but its services are being used by the American school staff for personal mail, contrary to 5 FAM 343.5. Personal first-class mail and magazines addressed to members of the school staff were found in the mailroom. The embassy's current mailroom standard operating procedures and its new-customer orientation guide do not address this issue. The OIG team informally recommended that Embassy Warsaw modify its mail and pouch standard operating procedures and guides to address mail and pouch usage limits for the American school and that it implement the limitations.

Information Security

Embassy Warsaw and Consulate General Krakow have satisfactory INFOSEC programs. At the embassy, an American IPC staff member is the primary information systems security officer (ISSO) and the information systems officer is the alternate ISSO. The staff ensures the networks meet the Department's patch management requirements, and Embassy Warsaw's ISSO continuously monitors the network for security related anomalies.

The RSO is the primary ISSO at Consulate General Krakow, and the consulate general's management officer is the alternate ISSO. (b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)
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The OIG team informally recommended that the embassy assign the ISSO also to serve as the consulate general's primary ISSO. The consulate general's management officer can remain the alternate ISSO.

Security Documentation

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tionally, the emergency destruction plan drills are not conducted at Consulate Gen-
eral Krakow quarterly, as required by 5 FAM 121.2. Contrary to Department guide-
lines, the post's management has not participated in the past three quarterly drills.
Although Embassy Warsaw conducts the drills in a timely manner, only the IM and
regional security office staff participated in these drills. Therefore, the OIG team
informally recommended that Embassy Warsaw conduct and document quarterly
emergency destruction plan drills for both the embassy and the consulate general
that include participation by post management and security office and information
management staff.

QUALITY OF LIFE

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The embassy's EEO program is slowly coming to life due to the efforts of the new EEO counselor, but several complications exist. The Secretary of State's policy about EEO and diversity, printed in both English and Polish, is posted only on the embassy's web site, and some employees do not have access to computers. Also, the electronic information that is available is not easily accessible; it is buried within the human resources or management sections of the web site. In addition, the embassy does not prominently display significant information about the EEO program or the Federal Women's Program, as required by the Office of Civil Rights. Furthermore, monthly activity reports have not been submitted to the Department as required. These shortcomings have resulted in employees not being fully aware of EEO principles.

Recommendation 11: Embassy Warsaw should publicize Equal Employment Opportunity principles to all its employees and adhere to requirements set by the Office of Civil Rights, including providing permanent bulletin board space for posting contact information and literature about the Equal Employment Opportunity and Federal Women's programs. (Action: Embassy Warsaw)

Another matter of concern is that the embassy designated the EEO counselor to also be the Federal Women's Program coordinator. This arrangement presents a major conflict because the Office of Civil Rights prohibits the EEO counselor and Federal Women's Program coordinator from being the same individual. Should the coordinator learn of a specific allegation of discrimination while counseling an individual, the coordinator must immediately refer the employee to the EEO counselor for proper processing; this requires a separation of duties.

Recommendation 12: Embassy Warsaw should designate an individual, other than the Equal Employment Opportunity counselor, to be the Federal Women's Program coordinator and should establish a separation of duties and administer the programs separately. (Action: Embassy Warsaw)

The EEO counselor recently completed the mandatory EEO training and is attending various embassy staff meetings to train other employees. The sessions have been helpful to all employees but are particularly valuable to LES, many of whom are unaware that EEO principles pertain to them. The counselor also plans to publicize EEO principles by setting up information bulletin boards in all annexes, including a warehouse where some employees speak little English and have no access to computers. The OIG team made informal recommendations to improve the EEO program and bring it into compliance with Department regulations.

HEALTH UNIT

The health unit provides quality, dependable healthcare and scored high on OIG's questionnaire and the ICASS survey. The staff consists of a regional medical officer, two contract nurses, and an administrative assistant. The regional medical officer is responsible for eight constituent posts in Scandinavia and Eastern Europe and travels frequently. In his absence, the nurses provide full-time coverage, and the post's medical advisor is available on a part-time basis or as needed. Backup coverage is available through the regional medical officer and Foreign Service nurse practitioners teams in London, Berlin, and Moscow. The regional psychiatrist is based in Vienna and visits biannually.

Medical care in Warsaw is unreliable and does not meet U.S. standards. However, the embassy's health unit provides primary care health services for acute and chronic medical problems within the scope of practice of its individual health care providers. Services include primary care health assessments, referral to local physicians and health care facilities, and, if necessary, medical evacuation to the nearest adequate medical facility. Other services provided are: orientation programs including hospital tours, health promotion efforts, management of acute and chronic health problems, professional referrals, immunizations, pharmacy services, and limited laboratory and radiology services.

The health unit uses different hospitals for different medical conditions, based on that hospital's specialty services. Emergency room services are limited in all Polish hospitals. The health unit provides tours of approximately seven hospitals to orient employees to their locations, procedures, and limitations.

Medical personnel conduct cafeteria inspections quarterly and submit the results to the American Community Association. A recent inspection documented several deficiencies, including failure to maintain food at proper temperatures. However, the health unit did not follow up with the association to confirm the cafeteria's compliance. The OIG team made an informal recommendation to strengthen oversight.

COMMUNITY LIAISON OFFICE

The CLO performs well. Its scores on OIG's questionnaire and the ICASS survey were better than satisfactory. During the inspection, the incumbent CLO coordinator departed, and a new CLO coordinator, who was previously the assistant CLO coordinator, took over. The embassy's sponsorship program for arriving employees and families works well. (b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)

The embassy has few employment positions for spouses. There are currently 58 adult family members, of whom 12 are employed in the mission and eight in the local economy. The unemployment rate in Warsaw is five percent. Local employment opportunities are limited and challenging because of the language requirements. The local employment advisor coordinates workshops and provides job assistance to spouses and oversees the Strategic Networking Assistance Program (SNAP). Embassy Warsaw has been a SNAP post since the program's inception in 2002, and its SNAP program was the first to be funded by ICASS. The program has served 49 SNAP participants to date.

Embassy morale is mixed. Some employees attributed the mixed morale to the long, extreme winters and the absence of sun, but post management's attention to morale scored below average on OIG's questionnaire. The Ambassador has met informally with the CLO coordinator and been supportive of activities, hosting many events at his residence. However, the DCM does not meet periodically with the CLO coordinator to receive reports on community matters as required by 2 FAM 113.10. The OIG team made an informal recommendation to address this.

SCHOOLS

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(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6) The school benefits from its relationship with the embassy, which provides a diplomatic legal umbrella and assists the school in legalizing its existence.

The school's curriculum is college preparatory, and it also offers an International Baccalaureate program. The school has a state-of-the-art facility, including several libraries and computer laboratories and offers an extensive program of after-school activities and athletics. (b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)

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EMPLOYEE ASSOCIATION

The embassy's American Commissary Association (ACA) operates a commissary, cafeteria, video sales, and other services. ACA is up to date on its audit and financial reports and is operating with a small profit realized for 2003 through 2005.

During the inspection, Commissary and Recreation Office staff conducted a comprehensive review of ACA and recommended improving internal controls, financial statement ratios, and safety and health. The office also recommended discontinuing exchange services and the extending of credit to association members and improving its operating procedures.

MANAGEMENT CONTROLS

The 2004 annual chief of mission internal controls certification disclosed one reportable management control weakness. (b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)

The chief of mission internal controls certification also reported a minor deficiency in the monitoring and control of motor pool resources. Embassy Warsaw has addressed this deficiency by eliminating its automotive parts and supplies inventory. The mission now procures automotive supplies locally. The OIG team did, however, find a deficiency in grants management.

GRANTS MANAGEMENT

The PAS awarded grants valued in excess of \$306,000 in FY 2005, and had awarded grants worth more than \$140,000 through April 2006. In addition, grants valued at \$40,000 were awarded to the American School of Warsaw. The overall management of the grants program was excellent, but some of its practices and procedures were informally questioned by post personnel. For example, the American School of Warsaw submitted bills for expenses incurred in July 2005, but the grant to the school did not take effect until September 2005 and had no provision indicating that pre-grant costs were covered. There is little or no written guidance available on this issue.

Recommendation 13: Embassy Warsaw should request, and the Bureau of Administration's Office of the Procurement Executive provide, formal guidance concerning the funding of costs incurred prior to the award of grants and regarding retroactive funding. (Action: Embassy Warsaw, in cooperation with A)

FORMAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recommendation 1: The Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, in coordination with the Bureau of Human Resources, should approve Embassy Warsaw's request (06 Warsaw 845) and change the designation of position 12124000 from labor officer to political officer. (EUR, in coordination with DGHR)
- Recommendation 2: Embassy Warsaw should issue guidance to the public affairs section, advising it of Department policy requiring that the budget and fiscal officer first certify the availability of funds before the grantee signs a grant. (Action: Embassy Warsaw)
- Recommendation 3: Embassy Warsaw should hire an outside contractor or eligible family member to finish the update of the consular section's pages on the embassy web site. (Action: Embassy Warsaw)
- Recommendation 4: The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations should appoint a project director for Embassy Warsaw's consular expansion project. (Action: OBO)
- Recommendation 5: The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations should set a time line for completion of the Embassy Warsaw's consular expansion project. (Action: OBO)
- Recommendation 6: The Bureau of Consular Affairs, in coordination with Embassy Warsaw, should determine when to continue devolution of immigrant visa processing in order to help Embassy Warsaw plan for reallocation of consular resources. (Action: CA, in coordination with Embassy Warsaw)
- Recommendation 7: Embassy Warsaw, in coordination with the Bureaus of Consular Affairs and Human Resources, should establish a full-time, mid-level fraud prevention manager position. (Action: Embassy Warsaw, in coordination with CA and DGHR)
- Recommendation 8: Embassy Warsaw should have Consulate General Krakow designate the new FSO-3 consular section deputy as the nonimmigrant visa unit's chief. (Action: Embassy Warsaw)

Recommendation 9: Embassy Warsaw should create standard mission-wide procedures for processing nonimmigrant visa applications, particularly regarding the use of courier pass-back and waiving interviews for applicants under the age of 14. (Action: Embassy Warsaw)

Recommendation 10: (b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)

Recommendation 11: Embassy Warsaw should publicize Equal Employment Opportunity principles to all its employees and adhere to requirements set by the Office of Civil Rights, including providing permanent bulletin board space for posting contact information and literature about the Equal Employment Opportunity and Federal Women's programs. (Action: Embassy Warsaw)

Recommendation 12: Embassy Warsaw should designate an individual, other than the Equal Employment Opportunity counselor, to be the Federal Women's Program coordinator and should establish a separation of duties and administer the programs separately. (Action: Embassy Warsaw)

Recommendation 13: Embassy Warsaw should request, and the Bureau of Administration's Office of the Procurement Executive provide, formal guidance concerning the funding of costs incurred prior to the award of grants and regarding retroactive funding. (Action: Embassy Warsaw, in cooperation with A)

INFORMAL RECOMMENDATIONS

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

Executive Direction

For internal management of embassy operations, the DCM relies on the management counselor, who reports to him. The DCM intervenes directly as needed on individual issues. This has resulted in the perception by some management staff that the DCM is not interested in their overall work.

Informal Recommendation 1: The deputy chief of mission should increase direct contact with the management staff's sections as appropriate.

Political

The Ambassador's biweekly law enforcement meeting lacks some embassy representatives who should be present. With the addition of a political section officer, this meeting could also address the consular section's Visas Viper requirements.

Informal Recommendation 2: The Ambassador's biweekly law enforcement meeting should be renamed the Law Enforcement Working Group, and, if the Ambassador is not present, it should be chaired by the deputy chief of mission. When the Drug Enforcement Administration establishes its office, a representative of the office and an officer from the political section should attend the meeting.

Public Diplomacy

The director of Embassy Warsaw's AIRC is talented in computer design. The 2006 AIRC Annual Plan includes graphic design and printing for PAS and front office initiatives. However, the AIRC director also carries out design and printing requests from other sections, which takes time from his AIRC work and should be out-sourced.

Informal Recommendation 3: Embassy Warsaw should advise the director of its American information resource center to limit his graphic design work to public affairs section initiatives and executive office requests.

The embassy's web site chronicles the Ambassador's activities, often with daily updates involving photos taken in the front office by the PAS audio-visual technician. The technician's talents would be better used if he were working with the AIRC on planned video-streaming initiatives and other media projects. The Ambassador's staff assistant should take the photographs and provide appropriate captions for the web site, and the audio-visual technician should direct his talents to other tasks.

Informal Recommendation 4: Embassy Warsaw should have the Ambassador's staff assistant take photos of the Ambassador's visitors for use on the embassy web site.

CONSULAR OPERATIONS

The DCM does not review the consulate general's adjudication of "A" referrals.

Informal Recommendation 5: The deputy chief of mission should review the consul general's adjudication of "A" visa referrals.

The DCM does not meet with the consul general when the Ambassador is away.

Informal Recommendation 6: The deputy chief of mission should stand in for the Ambassador whenever the Ambassador cannot make his scheduled meeting with the consul general.

Local-hire employees would benefit from additional onsite training and from meeting LES from other consular sections in the region.

Informal Recommendation 7: Embassy Warsaw should include locally employed staff in its annual Eastern European consular conference.

Embassy Warsaw's referral policy needs a minor amendment.

Informal Recommendation 8: Embassy Warsaw's referral policy should clearly state that an applicant who has been previously refused a visa will not qualify for an "A" referral.

Consulate General Krakow's NIV unit has difficulty keeping up with demand during the peak season.

Informal Recommendation 9: Embassy Warsaw should treat Poland as a single consular district during the busiest months of the year.

Local-hire staff of the embassy's consular section complain about the lack of training opportunities.

Informal Recommendation 10: Embassy Warsaw should consult closely with Consulate General Krakow regarding offsite training opportunities for LES.

Consulate General Krakow's consular section needs additional interview windows.

Informal Recommendation 11: The consul general and consular section chief should closely review the possibility of doing nonimmigrant visa intake at the two ACS/Federal Benefits Unit windows across from the courtyard.

The movement of applicants from outside of Consulate General Krakow into the NIV waiting room is uneven.

Informal Recommendation 12: Embassy Warsaw should coordinate with Consulate General Krakow to look into ways to make more effective use of the consulate general's inside ground floor space to create a smoother flow of nonimmigrant visa applicants into and out of the building.

There has been no formal high-level representational event held to recognize the wardens' assistance.

Informal Recommendation 13: Embassy Warsaw should hold a reception hosted by the Ambassador for Consulate General Krakow's wardens.

ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS

Housing

In Krakow, the short-term-leased residence (lease S264-FBO-259) far exceeds OBO space and cost standards, as outlined in 15 FAM 237 and 15 FAM 312.

Informal Recommendation 14: Embassy Warsaw should terminate short-term lease number S264-FBO-259.

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Human Resources

The Human Resources office lacks current written policies and standard operating procedures.

Informal Recommendation 16: Embassy Warsaw should establish written policies and standard operating procedures for the human resources office and include them on its web site.

The embassy's policy for LES grievances limits the final appeal to the Ambassador.

Informal Recommendation 17: Embassy Warsaw should correct its grievance policy for locally employed staff to reflect their right to contact the Office of Civil Rights.

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The LES association is moribund. Some employees were unaware that it existed. The association has met with post management but did not provide feedback to the LES community.

Informal Recommendation 19: Embassy Warsaw should issue a management notice, announcing the existence of the locally employed staff association and its programs.

Informal Recommendation 20: Embassy Warsaw should provide guidance to the locally employed staff association that includes formalization of procedures, such as establishing agendas, conducting periodic meetings with Foreign Service national employees, recording minutes, meeting with post management, and providing feedback to the membership.

Financial Management

At Consulate General Krakow, cash verifications are being conducted in a predictable pattern, usually at the end of the month per 4 FAH-3 H-397.1-2.

Informal Recommendation 21: Embassy Warsaw should require Consulate General Krakow to conduct cash verifications using an unpredictable pattern at varying times of the month.

The backup consular cashier at Consulate General Krakow has been officially designated as a subcashier but has not received a cash advance.

Informal Recommendation 22: Embassy Warsaw should require Consulate General Krakow to provide the alternate consular subcashier with a cash advance.

Information Management and Information Security

Consulate General Krakow does not have American IM staff onsite to support and oversee LES working in IM.

Informal Recommendation 23: Embassy Warsaw should include consulate general Krakow information management support as part of the embassy's information management staff's work requirements.

The LES at Consulate General Krakow are not fully integrated with the embassy's IM staff.

Informal Recommendation 24: Embassy Warsaw should require the locally employed staff at the embassy and consulate general to be cross-trained on their respective information technology systems, to foster teamwork and supplement classroom training.

The embassy's current mailroom standard operating procedures and new-customer orientation guide do not address the mailroom limitations placed on (b)(2)(b)(6)
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Informal Recommendation 25: Embassy Warsaw should modify its mail and pouch standard operating procedures and guides to address the pouch usage limits for the (b)(2)(b)(6) school.

Network security will be enhanced if Consulate General Krakow's nontechnical FSOs no longer serve as the ISSO.

Informal Recommendation 26: Embassy Warsaw should assign the embassy information systems security officer to also be Consulate General Krakow's primary information systems security officer, although Consulate General Krakow's management officer can remain the alternate information systems security officer.

The emergency destruction plan drills are not being conducted at Consulate General Krakow on a quarterly basis, as required by 5 FAM 121.2, and post management has not participated in the past three quarterly drills.

Informal Recommendation 27: Embassy Warsaw should conduct and document quarterly emergency destruction plan drills for both the embassy and the consulate general and include participation by post management, regional security office, and information management staff.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The embassy's electronic information about EEO principles and the Federal Women's Program is not organized and easily accessible.

Informal Recommendation 28: Embassy Warsaw should create electronic folders for the Equal Employment Opportunity program and Federal Women's Program on the embassy's web site and store pertinent information there.

Embassy Warsaw has not fulfilled its EEO monthly reporting requirements.

Informal Recommendation 29: Embassy Warsaw should submit monthly reports, including a negative report when there is no activity, as required by the Office of Civil Rights.

HEALTH UNIT

The health unit does not follow up with the American Community Association to confirm corrective action for sanitation and other deficiencies noted in food service operations.

Informal Recommendation 30: Embassy Warsaw should implement procedures to follow up on deficiencies found during health unit inspections of food service operations.

MANAGEMENT CONTROL

The general services office has not affixed a bar-code label to some nonexpendable supply items stored in the warehouse in Krakow and has not recorded this information in the nonexpendable property application program (14 FAM 413.5).

Informal Recommendation 31: Embassy Warsaw should affix bar-code labels to all nonexpendables stored in the warehouse in Krakow and record the bar codes and acquisition costs of these items in nonexpendable property records.

PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS

	Name	Date of Arrival
Ambassador	Victor H. Ashe	07/04
Deputy Chief of Mission	Kenneth M. Hillas Jr.	07/05
Chiefs of Sections:		
Administrative	Sarah F. Drew	07/05
Consular	Lisa A. Piascik	08/04
Political	Mary T. Curtin	08/04
Economic	Richard A. Rorvig	08/03
Public Affairs	Edward J. Kulakowski	08/04
Regional Security	Dean L. deVilla	07/03
Consulate General Krakow	Kenneth J. Fairfax	08/03
Other Agencies:		
Foreign Agricultural Service	Edwin H. Porter	08/05
Department of Defense		
Army Attaché	Col. Henry J. Nowak	07/03
Air Attaché	Col. Michael J. Posvar	05/03
Naval Attaché	Maj. Donald J. Thieme	01/04
Office of Defense Cooperation	Col. Stanley J. Prusinski	07/03
Commercial Service	David R. McNeill	07/04
Federal Bureau of Investigation	John V. Bienkowski	12/05

ABBREVIATIONS

ACS	American citizens services
AIRC	American information resource center
AmCham	American Chamber of Commerce
ARSO	Assistant regional security officer
B&F	Budget and fiscal
CA	Bureau of Consular Affairs
CG	Consul general
CLO	Community liaison office
CS	Commercial Service
DCM	Deputy chief of mission
Department	Department of State
DS	Bureau of Diplomatic Security
ECS	Employee Consultation Services
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunity
ELO	Entry-level officer
EU	European Union
EUR	Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs
FAS	Foreign Agricultural Service
FPM	Fraud prevention manager
FSO	Foreign Service officer
FSN	Foreign Service national
IAP	Immigration Advisory Program
ICASS	International Cooperative Administrative Support Services
IM	Information management
INFOSEC	Information security
IPC	Information programs center

ISC	Information systems center
ISSO	Information systems security officer
LES	Locally employed staff
MPP	Mission Performance Plan
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NIV	Nonimmigrant visa
OBO	Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations
ODC	Office of Defense Cooperation
OIG	Office of Inspector General
PAO	Public affairs officer
PAS	Public affairs section
PLU	Public liaison unit
RSO	Regional security officer
SNAP	Strategic Networking Assistance Program

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