DECEMBER 2021

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

In response to a recommendation in the 2020 report *Inspection of Embassy London and Constituent Posts, United Kingdom* (ISP-I-20-12), Embassy London took steps that resulted in $243,993 being put to better use. The embassy reprogrammed a Diplomatic and Consular Program-funded information management officer position to an International Cooperative Administrative Support Services (ICASS)-funded position.

In December 2021, Kentey Ramone Fielder pleaded guilty to one count of wire fraud and aggravated identity theft. Department of Justice and OIG special agents determined that from approximately September 2014 through February 2017, Fielder schemed to defraud multiple government agencies by continuing to seek government contracts after being debarred. He did this by impersonating government contracting officers, fraudulently inducing another company to complete work on a purported contract, and forging government documents. In May 2019, Fielder and his known business entities were previously suspended from doing business with the government. They were arrested in August 2020 following indictment. Sentencing is pending.

In December 2021, William Snow, a former contractor who worked for a firm that provided professional staffing services to the U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM), was indicted for engaging in a bribery and fraud scheme with former Contracting Officer Diane Sturgis. Nine months earlier, Sturgis was sentenced to 2 years in prison and ordered to pay $45,000 in restitution and a $10,000 fine. OIG and FBI special agents determined that between late 2014 and 2016, both Snow and Rita Starliper, the owner and CEO of a government contracting firm, agreed to hire Sturgis’s relative for a job involving minimal work that resulted in payments of more than $68,000. In exchange, Sturgis provided preferential treatment that included the awarding of a professional staffing contract worth millions of dollars and the steering of the procurement process to benefit Snow, Starliper, and the contracting firm. Starliper was sentenced in November 2021 to 1 year in prison, 2 years supervised release, and a $100 special assessment.

RECOMMENDATIONS STATUS
as of December 31, 2021

**647***
Open
Recommendations

33
Recommendations Closed During December

View Latest Monthly Recommendation Reports

View Report Highlights

Classified recommendations above are not included in these totals since their status is currently unavailable due to COVID-19 remote working conditions.

*This total also includes 45 recommendations associated with IBWC.

In December 2021, Roudy Pierre-Louis, a former budget analyst at the United States Embassy in Haiti, was sentenced to more than a year in Federal prison and ordered to pay $156,950 in restitution. In July 2021, he had pleaded guilty to one count of wire fraud in South Carolina District Court in Charleston, SC. Army Criminal Investigative Division, Defense Criminal Investigative Service, and OIG special agents determined that, from 2015 through 2018, Pierre-Louis forged the names of U.S. Southern Command military commanders on vouchers he created. This was done to obtain cash from the U.S. Embassy. In July 2019, the U.S. Embassy terminated the employment of four locally employed staff members and counseled one for their roles in the fraud scheme.

SPOTLIGHTS ON SUCCESS

Mission’s ‘Consular Round Ups’ Praised by Bureau of Consular Affairs as an Effective Outreach Tool (*Inspection of the U.S. Mission to the Dutch Caribbean, ISP-I-22-04*)

The U.S. Mission to the Dutch Caribbean’s Consular Section developed a unique reporting method to highlight its important projects, sending engaging and informative monthly “Consular Round Up” emails to U.S. Government stakeholders detailing the section’s activities and workload.
Each report included photos of consular staff at various outreach events, descriptions of the month’s consular activities, workload graphs and charts, and updates on consular projects. The Bureau of Consular Affairs praised the “Consular Round Ups” as a proactive, effective communication tool for increasing the understanding of consular work within the mission, geographic region, and the Department. The Office of Fraud Prevention Programs featured the mission’s “Consular Round Ups” in the November/December 2020 Fraud Digest as an example of how a small post can conduct consular outreach to a wide variety of stakeholders.

**Americana Box Program Engaged With Students With Limited or No Internet Access** *(Inspection of Embassy Asuncion, Paraguay, ISP-I-22-05)*

Embassy Asuncion’s Public Diplomacy Section’s Americana Box program provided science, technology, engineering, arts, and math problem-solving content, complemented by English-teaching materials, to students with limited or no internet access. Initiated shortly before the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the program effectively used the section’s American Spaces expertise and logistical capabilities to provide students with boxes that included activities normally only found in American Spaces. The section engaged partner organizations, including the four American Spaces in Paraguay, to develop original hardcopy content and distribute the boxes to students in their communities, many of whom live in areas that are difficult or dangerous to reach. The pandemic intensified the need for the program, and the section had planned to double the size of the pilot version of the program in 2021. The imaginative and effective Americana Box program reached a new youth audience and demonstrated U.S. commitment to educational opportunity at a time when foreign adversaries were actively competing with the United States in public diplomacy engagement. The section also developed toolkits in English and Spanish for use by other public diplomacy sections interested in replicating the program.

**NEW WORK STARTED**

- Review of Emergency Action Planning and Guiding the Evacuation and Suspension of Operations at U.S. Embassy Kabul, Afghanistan
- Project Related to Authorizations to Operate for Department of State Information Systems
- Audit of Department of State FY 2021 Compliance With the Payment Integrity Information Act of 2019
- Audit of Department of State FY 2022 Compliance With the Geospatial Data Act of 2018
- Review of the Department of State Afghan Special Immigrant Visa Program

**REPORTS ISSUED**

- Inspection of the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs (ISP-I-22-06)
- Inspection of Embassy Asuncion, Paraguay (ISP-I-22-05)
- Inspection of the U.S. Mission to the Dutch Caribbean (ISP-I-22-04)
- Information Report: Department of State 2021 Travel Charge Card Risk Assessment (AUD-CGI-22-14)
- Information Report: Department of State 2021 Charge Card Risk Assessment (AUD-CGI-22-13)