



**Office of Inspector General**  
United States Department of State

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Office of Evaluations & Special  
Projects

December 2019

**Management Assistance Report:  
Continued Health and Welfare Concerns  
for Antiterrorism Assistance Explosive  
Detection Canines**

MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE REPORT

## Summary of Review

Following the conclusion of an evaluation of the Department of State's management of the health and welfare of canines in the Explosive Detection Canine Program, the Office of Inspector General (OIG) received notice of additional canine deaths that warrant immediate Department action.

## BACKGROUND

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The Department of State (Department) antiterrorism assistance program provides training and equipment to foreign partner nations to enhance the ability of law enforcement to deter and counter terrorism. The program is managed jointly by the Bureau of Diplomatic Security (DS) and Counterterrorism and Countering Violent Extremism (CT). In the last two decades, the Department has funded the explosive detective training and deployment of over 200 canines to various foreign countries under this program.<sup>1</sup> The Kingdom of Jordan has been the largest recipient of trained dogs under the Explosive Detection Canine Program (EDCP).

On September 10, 2019, the Office of Inspector General (OIG) published its evaluation of the Department's management of the EDCP.<sup>2</sup> The evaluation concluded that the Department lacked controls to ensure the health and welfare of canines after deployment. Specifically, OIG found that the Department lacked policies and standards governing the EDCP, provided dogs to foreign partners without signed written agreements that outline standards of care, and conducted health and welfare follow-ups infrequently and inconsistently. Additionally, OIG found ongoing health and welfare concerns among dogs deployed to Jordan and found that the Department continued to supply dogs to Jordan without plans for funding or care. OIG detailed the cases of three specific dogs in Jordan (one died while in Jordan, and the other two were returned to the United States where one was euthanized and the other was nourished back to health). OIG recommended that the Department cease providing dogs to Jordan until there was a sustainability plan in place to ensure their health and welfare. The Department disagreed with this recommendation, citing national security-related concerns. The Department agreed with four other recommendations that addressed, for example, the need for written agreements regarding standards of care.

After the evaluation was made public in September 2019, OIG received a hotline complaint stating that additional canines beyond those described in the evaluation had died from non-natural (that is, preventable) causes in Jordan in 2019 after OIG concluded its fieldwork. As a result, OIG requested information from the Department regarding any deaths of canines in the EDCP since September 2018.

## FINDINGS

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The Office of Antiterrorism Assistance (DS/ATA) provided records for deaths of canines in the EDCP since September 2018. Dogs provided to Jordan are monitored on site by DS/ATA mentors and a veterinary

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<sup>1</sup> Countries that received canines under the antiterrorism assistance program are Nepal, Oman, Morocco, Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon, Afghanistan, Mexico, Dominican Republic, Thailand, Bahrain, and Indonesia.

<sup>2</sup> OIG, *Evaluation of the Antiterrorism Assistance Explosive Detection Canine Program—Health and Welfare* (ESP-19-06, September 2019).

team, and the Department relies on these personnel to provide information on the status of the dogs in that location. In other locations, DS/ATA relies upon foreign partner nations to self-report canine deaths.

Since September 2018, DS/ATA provided an additional 20 dogs to Jordan under the antiterrorism assistance program. DS confirmed to OIG that, in June and September 2019, two DS/ATA dogs deployed to Jordan died of non-natural causes; these dogs were in addition to those described in the September 2019 report. On June 7, 2019, a canine died of hyperthermia (heat stroke), according to a necropsy conducted by the DS/ATA veterinarian on site. OIG's September 2019 report describes heat-related injuries as a significant concern for canines working in the Middle East and quotes a veterinarian who said that deaths due to hyperthermia are "cases of negligence and improper care" rather than accidents. The same veterinarian stated that this is an especially "terrible death." OIG notes that DS/ATA was aware of this death when it reviewed a draft of the earlier OIG report, yet made no mention of the incident in its response. DS/ATA reported to OIG on September 27, however, that the mentors and vet team have redoubled efforts to prevent hyperthermia in Jordan. In September 2019, another dog died of poisoning by an insecticide that had been sprayed in or near a kennel. DS/ATA reported to OIG on September 27 that, as a result of this death, the insecticide will no longer be used in any of the Jordanian police force's kennels. Finally, DS informed OIG in October 2019 that another DS/ATA canine suffers from Leishmaniasis, a preventable but potentially deadly and transmittable vector-borne disease.<sup>3</sup> In short, while DS/ATA and its contractor have attempted to make improvements in Jordan, health and welfare concerns persist.

DS/ATA also informed OIG that it learned in May 2019 that of the 10 dogs provided by DS/ATA to Egypt in August 2018, one had died of lung cancer and another died from a ruptured gall bladder. DS also failed to mention these deaths in responding to a draft of OIG's earlier report. Subsequently, another dog in Egypt died of hyperthermia (heat stroke) in September 2019. As noted in OIG's prior report, Egypt denied Department officials permission to visit the kennels or the airport where the canines would work; Egypt also would not allow Department mentors to accompany dogs back to Egypt for in-country training. In September 2019, DS/ATA said Embassy Cairo had formally requested complete medical reports for the three deceased canines.

As noted above, DS/ATA and CT agreed with four recommendations in ESP-19-06 and have begun to implement new policies related to the care and welfare of canines deployed to foreign partners. For example, DS/ATA facilitated the retirement and adoption of seven canines within the United States in October 2019. These seven dogs had been trained by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms for DS/ATA and spent their careers working in Jordan. Additionally, from May to October 2019, DS completed health, welfare and validation visits for the DS/ATA dogs in four partner nations and had another four trips planned for 2019. In August 2019, 10 DS/ATA canines were repossessed from Morocco because the dogs were not being used for their intended purpose.

However, as also noted in its response to OIG's prior report, the Department disagreed with OIG's recommendation that it cease providing additional canines to Jordan until there is a sufficient sustainability plan in place to ensure their health and welfare. It asserted that it had taken significant steps to improve the health and welfare of the canines provided to Jordan and, moreover, stated that the program had to continue, regardless of these health and welfare concerns, due to ongoing national security issues in the region. However, the death of two canines from non-natural causes—namely, hyperthermia and poisoning—since June 2019 raises serious questions about the Department's

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<sup>3</sup> DS/ATA canine Mencey, highlighted in ESP-19-06, was euthanized in 2018 after receiving the same diagnosis.

contention that it has taken adequate steps to protect their health and safety. OIG is particularly concerned that the deaths of the two additional Jordanian dogs occurred while four Department-funded personnel were in-country to monitor the care of the dogs. OIG also reiterates that dogs receiving inadequate care or that are in poor health cannot perform the tasks for which they were trained, which seemingly undercuts any benefit from the program, national security or otherwise. In addition, Egypt's acceptance of canines while denying the Department the ability to monitor their health and welfare raises questions about the Department's ability to ensure that foreign assistance is being used as intended and achieving its purpose. The fact that 3 of the 10 dogs Egypt has received in the past year have died amplifies these concerns about the Department's lack of access. Accordingly, OIG has modified its earlier Recommendation 1 to include both Jordan and Egypt.

## RECOMMENDATION

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OIG makes the following recommendation to the Bureau of Diplomatic Security and Bureau of Counterterrorism and Countering Violent Extremism. Their complete response, sent on December 2, 2019, 2019, can be found in the Appendix.

**Recommendation 1:** OIG recommends that the Bureau of Counterterrorism and the Bureau of Diplomatic Security cease providing additional canines to Jordan and Egypt until there are plans in place to ensure their health and welfare and to provide continuous monitoring of their care.

**Management Response:** In their December 2, 2019, response, the Bureaus of Counterterrorism and Diplomatic Security concurred with the recommendation. The Department described several actions it is taking to address canine health and welfare concerns in Jordan, including providing enhanced medical equipment and training for host country veterinarians and handlers. Additionally, the Department stated that it has been engaging with both host governments to encourage and assist with improvements to their programs.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers this recommendation resolved. Based on the Department's concurrence to this recommendation, OIG also considers Recommendation 1 from *Evaluation of the Antiterrorism Assistance Explosive Detection Canine Program—Health and Welfare* (ESP-19-06) resolved. In ESP-19-06, OIG recommended that the Bureau of Counterterrorism and the Bureau of Diplomatic Security cease providing additional canines to Jordan until there was a sufficient sustainability plan in place to ensure their health and welfare. The Department did not concur, and OIG considered the recommendation unresolved at the time the report was published. This recommendation and Recommendation 1 from ESP-19-06 can be closed when the Bureaus provide documentation detailing the plans for health and welfare monitoring in Jordan and Egypt.

In the response to this Management Assistance Report, DS and CT contend that OIG's September 2019 evaluation and the current report "do not provide an accurate description of efforts the Department has undertaken to ensure the health and welfare" of the dogs provided to "partner nations." The Department also contends that the information set forth in the report was obtained from "hotline complaints and information collected from employees of the Department's contracted vendor supporting DS CVC." In fact, OIG's work is based on an extensive review of the canine program and a range of sources, including a review of over 25 reports detailing country canine assessments, canine follow up health and welfare visits, training after action reports, and veterinary assessments. In addition, OIG's review included testimonial evidence from people who directly observed the canines in country. Indeed, the facts in this management assistance report came directly from the Department based on an OIG document request. OIG also notes that, in accordance with our policies and our ordinary practice, OIG provided the Department an opportunity to review and comment on OIG's draft reports on these matters. The Department did not and has not identified any specific inaccuracies in either draft report.

## APPENDIX: MANAGEMENT RESPONSE



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

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December 2, 2019

## INFORMATION MEMO TO INSPECTOR GENERAL LINICK - OIG

FROM: CT – Nathan A. Sales  
 DS – Michael T. Evanoff *MA*

SUBJECT: Response to the Office of Inspector General (OIG) Management Assistance  
 Report: Continued Health and Welfare Concerns for Antiterrorism Assistance  
 Explosive Detection Canines, November 2019

The Bureau of Diplomatic Security (DS) and the Bureau of Counterterrorism (CT) jointly provide the response below to the recommendation made in the OIG's draft report – Management Assistance Report: Continued Health and Welfare Concerns for Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) Explosive Detection Canines.

**Recommendation #1:** OIG recommends that the Bureau of Counterterrorism and the Bureau of Diplomatic Security cease providing additional canines to Jordan and Egypt until there are plans in place to ensure their health and welfare and to provide continuous monitoring of their care.

**DS and CT Response:** DS and CT concur with Recommendation 1 to cease temporarily providing additional canines to Jordan and Egypt until plans to ensure canine health and welfare and continuous monitoring of their care are implemented, as assessed by the Department of State's Canine Validation Center's (CVC) canine subject matter experts. DS and CT will continue to address health and welfare needs through the ATA program in Jordan and Egypt and provide assistance including training, equipment, and mentorship. Additionally, embassy personnel in Cairo and Amman will continue monitoring their care coupled with CVC welfare visits and bi-annual DS and CT oversight visits by Program Managers. U.S. Embassy Amman and Cairo leadership will also continue to engage with government leadership to urge them to prioritize and make needed improvements to canine care.

Pending availability of FY 2019 funding and prioritization of the Department of State's NADR resources, DS and CT plan to fund a *Global Explosive Detection Canine Enhancement & Sustainment Program* to improve and sustain the health and welfare of canines in all ATA partner nations currently maintaining ATA-granted canines. This will include increased health, welfare, and validation assessments and checks; mobile veterinary and training teams; veterinary medical equipment; initial program assessments; retirement missions; and negotiations to obtain letters of agreement with partner nations. In the meantime, DS and CT have taken recent steps to address health and welfare, implement improved procedures, and provide continuous monitoring and oversight in both Jordan and Egypt.

In Jordan, DS and CT deployed a two-person CVC veterinary mentor team since the fall of 2018, in addition to two existing canine handler mentors, to work with the K-9 unit full-time on health and welfare. We are continuing to provide enhanced medical equipment, capabilities, and

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training, including a state of the art containerized medical clinic, which arrived in September 2019. Our U.S. Strategic Planning Advisor mentor to the Ministry of Interior's Public Security Directorate's (PSD) Headquarters, which oversees the K-9 unit, continues to assist the Jordanians in strategically planning for their subordinate units and addressing needs, including budgeting and possibly realigning the K-9 unit to include greater PSD oversight.

The CVC veterinary team in Jordan continues to prioritize a multi-pronged approach focused on monitoring weight and food rations, testing the entire canine population for vector-borne diseases, educating PSD veterinarians and the Jordanian canine handlers on proper canine nutrition, and documenting weight trends. Additionally, the team will remain to mentor the Jordanian PSD veterinarians toward improved patient tracking practices and best physical exam practices, as well as routine documentation of all patient encounters.

Most recently, in October 2019, U.S. Embassy Amman Chargé d'Affaires Karen Sasahara met with the PSD Director and raised a list of organizational, policy, and personnel-related recommendations that the Jordanians need to implement in order to continue the ATA Explosive Detection K-9 Program. DS/T/ATA Director, Embassy Amman Regional Security Office, DS and CT Program Managers also separately met with PSD to raise such requirements and recommendations which need to take place. The Government of Jordan has been receptive to making required changes and has taken initial steps to implement them. Additionally, DS and CT are planning to add two additional veterinary mentors to the Jordan team starting in early 2020 once new FY 2019 funding is obligated. Embassy Amman believes that a more strategic approach to the canine program such as employing a mix of canines and technology to carry out explosive detection will lead to more appropriate use of the canines, particularly in remote and high-volume venues. Embassy Amman also supports the return to the U.S. of all canines upon their retirement from active duty in Jordan.

In Egypt, the Department of State continues to engage with the Government of Egypt to enhance the program and address health, welfare, and continuous monitoring. Ambassador Nathan Sales, Coordinator for Counterterrorism visited Egypt in August 2019 and raised the need to position ATA canines at Cairo International Airport and cooperate with U.S. Embassy requests. Embassy Cairo has continued to engage with the Ministry of Interior (MOI), which gave the final approval for a CVC health and welfare visit to occur November 10-14, followed by two weeks of training to occur in mid-January. Regarding monitoring canine care, the final report from this month's CVC visit to Cairo will provide DS with the information required to plan for canine program sustainment initiatives in the months ahead.

The CVC team in Cairo is currently led by the CVC's senior veterinarian and is tasked with evaluating the current health and welfare status of the ATA canines and making recommendations for training and equipment grants designed to enhance the Egyptian MOI's capacity to provide and sustain quality canine care. Pending the results of the ongoing CVC visit and availability of funding, DS and CT are prepared to take the following steps: 1) provide veterinary medical equipment and offer additional training at the CVC facility for MOI veterinarians who routinely care for the ATA canines, and 2) hire a CVC veterinarian to provide veterinary mentoring in Egypt to the MOI veterinarians involved in the care of the ATA canines.

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**DS and CT Note:** DS and CT note that the OIG's initial report ISP – 19-06 and follow-up evaluation report do not provide an accurate description of efforts the Department has undertaken to ensure the health and welfare of the explosive detection canines granted to our partner nations. In addition, DS and CT believe that OIG's findings from its initial and follow-up evaluation are based mainly on hotline complaints and information collected from employees of the Department's contracted vendor supporting DS CVC. These findings are not based on in-country fieldwork since the OIG did not conduct visits to either Egypt or Jordan. Nor did OIG provide detailed information regarding specific ATA-granted canines with health concerns such as chip numbers or other identifiable information, making it difficult to confirm if the canines referenced in the report are in fact part of the ATA program.

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