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**OIG**

**Office of Inspector General**

U.S. Department of State • Broadcasting Board of Governors

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ISP-I-17-12

Office of Inspections

May 2017

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# Inspection of Embassy Monrovia, Liberia

BUREAU OF AFRICAN AFFAIRS

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# OIG HIGHLIGHTS

ISP-I-17-12

## What OIG Inspected

OIG inspected U.S. Embassy Monrovia from October 5 to 26, 2016.

## What OIG Recommended

This report includes a total of 26 recommendations. OIG made 23 recommendations to Embassy Monrovia to improve internal controls and emergency preparedness, and to provide shelter to consular clients. OIG also made one recommendation to the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations to comply with Department of State standards regarding the treatment of sewage; one recommendation to the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs to conduct contract evaluations; and one recommendation to the Bureau of the Comptroller and Global Financial Services to conduct an audit of travel-related expenses.

In their comments on the draft report, Department stakeholders concurred with 26 recommendations. The Department's response to each recommendation and OIG's reply can be found in the Recommendations Section of this report. OIG considers the recommendations resolved. The Department's formal written response is reprinted in its entirety in Appendix B.

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OFFICE OF INSPECTIONS

Bureau of African Affairs

Inspection of Embassy Monrovia, Liberia

## What OIG Found

- Embassy Monrovia was still recovering from the effects of responding to the Ebola crisis; internal controls and management programs were especially affected.
- The embassy had 21 internal control deficiencies in management, consular, political, and IT operations.
- The Department of State had not provided sewage treatment for 10 U.S. Government-owned buildings, allowing raw sewage to run into the Atlantic Ocean which is contrary to Department standards.
- Embassy Monrovia had not requested Department of State approval to operate a medical clinic for local employees on U.S. Government-owned property, which could create a liability for the Department.
- Spotlight on Success: The Public Affairs Section's collective training with grant recipients and Grants Officer Representatives helped mitigate financial risk.

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## CONTEXT

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Liberia is a small West African country with a population of 4 million and an annual per capita income of \$455. Liberia was one of the three countries hit hardest in the 2014-15 Ebola virus outbreak, and it is still recovering from the overall effects of this crisis. The outbreak substantially reduced the country's economic output, and Liberia had the most deaths from this disease. The Ebola outbreak caused a drop in agricultural production, leading to food insecurity, and closed cross border trade. At the same time, falling global prices for Liberia's major exports—iron ore and rubber—reduced both employment and government revenue. Liberia, still rebuilding from damage of a lengthy civil war, had to divert scarce resources from basic infrastructure investment into emergency health care. Private investment, which had started to rebound following the end of the civil war in 2003 and the successful elections of 2005 and 2011, has stalled. The International Monetary Fund estimates that the near zero growth of 2015 may be followed by negative one-half of one percent economic growth in 2016.

With weak governing institutions that are rebuilding from the 1989-2003 civil war, a 14-year long United Nations Mission to Liberia has overseen the ongoing transition to domestic stability. That Mission has drawn down to a minimal force of about 1,100 soldiers and 570 police. At the time of the inspection, the United Nations Security Council, of which the United States is a member, was considering whether the United Nations would remain during the late 2017 national elections. Liberia is now largely responsible for its own military and law enforcement security. However, endemic corruption poses a major challenge to promoting economic growth and maintaining respect for democratic structures.

Embassy Monrovia's 2015-2017 Integrated Country Strategy (ICS) goals include:

- Enhancing security, stability and the respect for rule of law through programs to aid the military, the police, and the court system.
- Strengthening weak governance through elections assistance and programs to professionalize the government, including a focus on transparency and anti-corruption.
- Improving health and education.
- Promoting economic growth, including programs in agriculture, transportation infrastructure, and private sector strengthening.

The Department of State (Department) rates Monrovia as high threat for crime. Embassy personnel receive a 30 percent hardship differential and a 30 percent cost of living allowance. At the time of the inspection, Embassy Monrovia comprised 115 U.S. direct-hires, 20 U.S. local hires, and 361 locally employed (LE) staff positions distributed among 6 agencies. Peace Corps, which evacuated during the Ebola epidemic, had returned 73 volunteers by the time of the inspection. The Millennium Challenge Corporation in 2016 began operations to quadruple power supply in Liberia and improve road infrastructure.

OIG evaluated the embassy's policy implementation, resource management, and management controls consistent with Section 209 of the Foreign Service Act.<sup>1</sup> OIG also assessed security, which is covered in a classified report that contains a comprehensive discussion of the conduct of the security program and issues affecting the safety of mission personnel and facilities.

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTION

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### Tone at the Top and Standards of Conduct

OIG assessed Embassy Monrovia's leadership on the basis of 115 on-site interviews and 65 interviews in Washington, including 61 that contained comments on Front Office performance; 120 questionnaires that U.S. and locally employed staff completed; and OIG's review of documents and observations of embassy meetings and activities during the course of the on-site inspection. Interviews consistently described the Ambassador and the Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) as empowering others and soliciting varying points of view—attributes of leadership in 3 Foreign Affairs Manual (FAM) 1214.

The Ambassador arrived in June 2016 with previous experience in Africa as DCM in Mozambique and as the Department's Director of the Office of Southern Africa Affairs. The DCM arrived in August 2016, having previously served as DCM in Burundi and in Iceland. In OIG interviews and meetings with embassy personnel, staff members consistently expressed appreciation for the Ambassador's and the DCM's openness and approachability.

The Ambassador and the DCM modeled integrity and commitment to ethical values through their adherence to Department standards on representational events and Official Residence Expenses. OIG reviewed all of the Ambassador's and the DCM's representational and Official Residence Expense vouchers and found no irregularities. The embassy recorded gifts in accordance with 2 FAM 960 and was preparing to use the new Department Gift Fund Registry, which took effect on October 1, 2016, as set forth in Department guidance.<sup>2</sup> OIG advised the Ambassador that, in addition to her personal adherence to Department standards, she increase her messaging to embassy staff on the importance of adhering to ethical values. Liberia ranked 83rd of 168 countries in Transparency International's Worldwide Index of perceptions of corruption.

OIG interviews in Washington and at Embassy Monrovia confirmed the embassy still was recovering from the effects of responding to the Ebola crisis. The Ambassador held three town hall meetings with embassy employees upon her arrival to highlight her theme of mutual respect among American and Liberian employees, a theme echoed by employees in OIG interviews and during OIG's observations of embassy meetings.

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix A.

<sup>2</sup> Department Cable 2016 State 97388, "NEW\* Reporting Requirements for Official Donations and Gifts to the Department of State," September 1, 2016.

Other U.S. Government agencies at the embassy consistently told OIG that the Ambassador was familiar with their programs and budgets, which is consistent with her 2 FAM 113 responsibilities to be fully informed of all embassy activities, and that the DCM, who arrived shortly before the inspection, was becoming increasingly knowledgeable. The DCM complied with 9 FAM 403.10 standards that he review at least 20 percent of non-immigrant visa refusals, but he had not reviewed any visa issuances. Guidance in 9 FAM 403.9, however, requires review of at least 10 percent of issuances. OIG advised the embassy to comply with these standards.

The Ambassador named an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) counselor in August 2016 and identified an LE staff liaison for EEO during the OIG on-site inspection. The embassy also posted EEO notices inside the chancery. However, OIG interviews and meetings with LE staff found they were unclear about the liaison's role and what constituted an EEO issue. Guidance in 3 FAM 1514.2 strongly encourages chiefs of mission to name more than one EEO counselor at embassies with more than 50 employees, Embassy Monrovia had 501 authorized positions but only one counselor. OIG advised the Ambassador to nominate a second EEO counselor and to increase communication and training with LE staff about the program.

## Execution of Foreign Policy Goals and Objectives

The Ambassador held 13 meetings with Liberia's President and Cabinet Members in her first two and one half months in Liberia, including regularly scheduled monthly meetings with the President. This is consistent with the 2 FAM 113 responsibility to maintain close relations with host government officials. The Ambassador advanced the Obama Administration's Global Health Security Agenda by working with Washington agencies and the Government of Liberia to sign a September 2016 bilateral agreement to cooperate on containing Ebola.<sup>3</sup> The DCM, while acting as Chargé d'Affaires, worked with the United Nations, the Department, and other U.S. agencies on options for the future of the United Nations Mission in Liberia in the run-up to the country's 2017 national elections.

Embassy Monrovia's ICS pre-dated the Ebola crisis. The Ambassador led a review of the ICS in July 2016 and began an interagency effort to update the ICS in accordance with the Department's 2016 ICS Guidance and with 18 FAM 005.1 requirements to ensure strategic integration and to manage optimally foreign assistance resources. OIG confirmed both the participation by all agencies at the embassy and interagency consensus that the update was needed to align U.S. policy priorities and objectives in Liberia in the wake of the Ebola crisis.

The embassy formed a Health Issues Working Group in 2015 to address the Ebola crisis. The working group effectively coordinated the programs of seven U.S. Government agencies addressing Ebola and other health threats in Liberia. Other informal embassy working groups addressed issues such as security assistance and reporting.

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<sup>3</sup> The Global Health Security Agenda seeks to accelerate progress toward a world safe and secure from infectious disease threats. Liberia is one of 17 priority countries.

## Adherence to Internal Controls

Embassy staff consistently told OIG that management procedures had been relaxed in response to the Ebola crisis and now needed to be tightened. The Ambassador met weekly with agency heads and chaired bi-weekly meetings of the Security Assistance Working Group in accordance with 2 FAM 113 and the President's Letter of Instruction to Chiefs of Mission to coordinate all U.S. assistance programs and to be informed of all U.S. agency activities. The DCM met weekly with each Department section chief to review their operations.

OIG found the embassy's 2016 Chief of Mission Management Control Statement of Assurance did not identify all internal control deficiencies. While it identified 2 deficiencies, OIG found numerous others, which are addressed throughout this report, and made 21 recommendations to improve the embassy's internal controls. The Ambassador and the DCM signed and submitted the 2016 Statement of Assurance two days after the DCM's arrival. They told OIG they decided to wait for the DCM to arrive because the acting DCM had not been a Department officer and was unfamiliar with the process. OIG requested to review the supporting documents but was told copies were not retained. OIG advised the Ambassador and the DCM to verify the embassy's steps to comply with the recommendations in this report before preparing its 2017 Statement of Assurance. OIG also advised the Ambassador to develop and maintain appropriate systems of management controls, in accordance with 2 FAM 113 and 2 FAM 022.7, and to emphasize in her messages to the embassy staff the importance of strengthening and sustaining internal controls.

## Security of the Mission

The Ambassador and the DCM attended to their responsibilities for security as outlined in the President's Letter of Instruction to Chiefs of Mission and in 2 FAM 113. Since the arrival of the Ambassador and the DCM in summer 2016, the Ambassador chaired an Emergency Action Committee meeting, and the embassy was current on embassy drills. The DCM met weekly with the Regional Security Officer to review security issues. In July 2016, the Ambassador signed the annual review of the memorandum of agreement with the Commander, U.S. Africa Command, on protection of Department of Defense personnel in Liberia. At the time of the inspection, the Ambassador had yet to conduct a town hall meeting for the non-embassy American community.

Security issues are discussed in greater detail in a related classified report.

## Developing and Mentoring Future Foreign Service Leadership

The Ambassador and the DCM oversaw the embassy's First-and Second-Tour program for Foreign Service officers and specialists, as required by 3 FAM 2242.4. The embassy had an active First- and Second- Tour Committee, as recommended in Department guidance,<sup>4</sup> and encouraged broad participation. In addition to officers and specialists from the Department, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and other agencies, it included Civil Service

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<sup>4</sup> Department Cable 2014 State 19636, "Mentoring the Next Generation – Take Charge!", February 22, 2014.

personnel and personal services contractors working at the embassy. Program participants consistently told OIG they appreciated the DCM's active role with the program. For example, he hosted a reception for them with the Liberian Ministry of Foreign Affairs' class of diplomats entering into the Liberian diplomatic service. Members told OIG the FAST program had been dormant during the Ebola crisis but had revived under the DCM's leadership.

## POLICY AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

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OIG found that Embassy Monrovia conducted effective advocacy and outreach, integrated mission elements appropriately, and maintained strong relationships with government officials, opposition leaders, the private sector, and civil society. However, OIG found some areas for improvement in reporting, public diplomacy grants, foreign assistance grants and contracts, consular crisis preparedness, and accommodations for consular clients, as discussed below.

### Foreign Assistance and Grants

The Public Affairs Section (PAS) awarded 40 public diplomacy grants totaling \$297,393 in FY 2015 and 30 public diplomacy grants totaling \$208,327 in FY 2016. These grants reflected the shift in the embassy's priorities from combating Ebola to supporting free and fair elections.

#### *Public Diplomacy Grants Lacked Formal Criteria and Risk Assessment*

OIG reviewed 10 of the 40 FY 2015 grants and 9 of 30 FY 2016 grants, including all awards in excess of \$10,000. The current PAS leadership had improved the section's grants management procedures, but OIG found grants files that still lacked evidence of pre-award evaluation criteria, risk assessment, or formal monitoring plans as required by the Department's Federal Assistance Policy Directive Sections 2.03A and 3.01-A. In interviews with OIG, PAS staff listed informal standards used to assess grants applications, such as prior grants management history and organizational strength that demonstrated a commitment to meeting these requirements. Staff confirmed, however, that these processes were not formalized and documented. The current section leadership inherited inadequate grants management procedures that had evolved during the Ebola outbreak and were further complicated by grants applicants' inability to access computers and the internet to complete required forms. The lack of formal steps for evaluating grants proposals risks diverting funds to projects that do not match mission priorities or to grants recipients who lack the capacity to implement the grant objectives.

**Recommendation 1:** Embassy Monrovia should implement formal standard operating procedures for conducting merit reviews and risk assessments of all grants proposals in accordance with Department guidance. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)

#### Spotlight on Success: Training for Grants Recipients

Among the changes implemented by PAS leadership were steps to mitigate financial risk by training its grants recipients. During the inspection, the section conducted collective training for FY 2016 grants recipients in the Information Resource Center to explain allowable expenditures, reporting requirements, use of required forms, and common errors. The section

also introduced the grants recipients to the Grants Officer's Representative who would be working with them to monitor the grant. In addition to a better understanding of the grants process, the collective training created networking opportunities among recipients working in related areas.

### ***Foreign Assistance Grants and Contracts***

The Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) committed \$83.5 million in foreign assistance grants and contracts for Liberia since 2011. This program, INL's largest in Africa by dollar value, was established to rebuild the police and military following the country's civil war. The program supported the first objective in the embassy's ICS, "enhanced security, stability and respect for rule of law." OIG reviewed INL's FY 2015-2017 programming to evaluate end-use monitoring, contracting management, and the operations of the embassy's INL Section.

### ***End-Use Monitoring***

INL's 2015 End-Use Monitoring report indicated deficiencies in tracking weapons and defense articles and maintaining up-to-date records on other non-defense items. Staffing shortages in the INL Section and lack of training precluded a complete verification of items. The INL Standard Operating Policy and Procedures for End-Use Monitoring specify that all weapons must be visually verified every year and that non-defense items, such as vehicles and riot gear, should be removed from the inventory lists at the end of their useful life. Lack of verification risks loss or misuse of weapons and other defense articles, while failure to remove non-defense items at the end of their useful life increases costs and difficulty of conducting end-use monitoring. OIG found that the embassy's INL Section had taken necessary steps to improve end-use monitoring, including implementing improved tracking procedures and hiring and training LE staff dedicated to end-use monitoring.

### ***End-of-Contract Evaluations Not Done***

Two contracts for law enforcement and judicial administration worth \$41.2 million did not have end-of-contract or end-of-phase evaluations. INL and the embassy attributed this deficiency to their focus on ongoing work and new contracts before judging the benefits of previous activities. This approach does not comply with INL's Standard Operating Procedures for Measurement and Evaluation, which states that evaluations should be done mid-term and at the end of the contract or after five years, whichever is shorter. The lack of impact evaluations makes it difficult to measure progress against the larger embassy ICS and INL Strategic Plan objectives of law enforcement and judicial professionalization. It also increases the difficulty in determining whether U.S. funds are being used effectively. In addition to these general concerns, results of the impact evaluations will be important to the Department's planning for a 2017 expansion of the INL Monrovia program using \$20 million in Ebola recovery funds.

**Recommendation 2:** The Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, in coordination with Embassy Monrovia, should conduct end-of-contract and end-of-phase impact evaluations immediately. (Action: INL, in coordination with Embassy Monrovia.)

### *Leahy Vetting Conducted in Accordance with Department Guidance*

From November 6, 2015, to September 1, 2016, Embassy Monrovia vetted 731 individuals and security units for potential gross human right abuses in accordance with applicable laws and Department requirements.<sup>5</sup>

## **Advocacy and Analysis**

### *Reporting was Relevant and Keyed to ICS Goals*

Embassy Monrovia aligned its activities and reporting with the three policy goals outlined in its ICS. OIG found that the reporting was coordinated across mission agencies. Washington consumers told OIG they found it relevant in evaluating U.S. engagement in Liberia. OIG reviewed 110 reporting cables from the 8 months preceding the inspection that were generated by the Political–Economic and INL Sections. Consumers told OIG they valued the political reporting on the progress made by Liberia's police and military forces in assuming responsibility for domestic stability. This reporting helped U.S. decision-making regarding the possible continuation of a United Nations force in 2017. The embassy's increased analytic reporting on the political landscape and political parties expected to contest the presidency in October 2017 elections helped inform U.S. contingency planning for potential civil instability. Washington consumers told OIG that they also welcomed the embassy's objectivity in a series of cables on how governance issues affect Liberia's stability.

The Political-Economic Section drew on the expertise of other agencies, a practice recommended by the Department, to deepen analysis and help cover staffing gaps. For example, the U.S. Agency for International Development contributed to energy sector, donor coordination, and other economic topics. Multiple Washington consumers told OIG that health sector reporting and advocacy was well-sourced and relevant to policy-makers. The embassy did no environment, science and technology reporting, partly due to a yearlong officer vacancy.

### *Regional, Multilateral, and Countrywide Reporting Lacking*

The embassy did not conduct regional and multilateral political and economic reporting and had little reporting on domestic issues in regions beyond the capital. Officers focused their resources on the Monrovia area, neglecting broader topics such as political issues outside of the city and environmental issues. According to 2 FAM 113.1 c (10) and (11), overseas missions are to observe, analyze, and report significant political, economic, and societal developments occurring abroad, and establish relations with potential leaders at all levels of society, including

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<sup>5</sup> The Leahy Amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 prohibits the Department of State from furnishing assistance to foreign security forces if the Department receives credible information that such forces have committed gross violations of human rights. See 22 U.S.C. 2378d.

those outside the power structure. In addition, U.S. economic statecraft guidance in 18 FAM 001.1-1 (c) (2) calls for a focus on economic issues in bilateral and multilateral diplomacy, the latter encompassing external relations. OIG advised the embassy to report on regional and multilateral political and economic affairs and on countrywide issues.

### ***Working Groups Lacked Official Recordkeeping***

The 2017 Elections Working Group and the Security Assistance Working Group did not record and maintain meeting minutes. The embassy had no policy on records management and did not train employees in accordance with regulations. The Federal Records Act, reflected in 5 FAM 400, mandates that employees create and preserve records. Guidance in 5 FAM 415 defines records as documentary materials made or received in the conduct of public business and calls for them to be preserved as evidence of functions, policies, decisions, procedures, and records. The FAM notes that failure to retain records risks the loss of information useful for their successors, for policy formulation and review, and for the preservation of historical records. OIG advised the embassy to prepare and maintain minutes of working group meetings.

### **Public Diplomacy**

OIG reviewed PAS activities in the areas of strategic planning and crosscutting working relations, media outreach and analysis, and operations at its Information Resource Center and American Corners.<sup>6</sup> In addition to the Information Resource Center located at the embassy, Embassy Monrovia supports regional American Corner library partners in Buchanan, Kakata, Zwerdu, and Zorzor through a combination of Bureau of International Information Program and Public Diplomacy discretionary funds. OIG found that the section complied with applicable Department standards in these areas.

### ***Insufficient Regional Information Resource Officer Oversight***

The regional Information Resource Officer (IRO), based in Accra, Ghana, had not visited Embassy Monrovia since June 2014. OIG reviewed correspondence between the embassy and the IRO and found 11 emails since November 2015, only three of which were Liberia specific; two of those dealt with the OIG inspection. While the Ebola outbreak made travel to Liberia difficult in 2014 and 2015, the current IRO had yet to visit Embassy Monrovia more than a year after the crisis abated. According to 10 FAM 362.1, IROs ideally should visit posts in their assigned regions at least twice a year, and Department guidance<sup>7</sup> states IROs should visit each post as required to evaluate and advise on the integrity of the American Spaces program. Between visits, they should also be available for consultations by phone, email, and video conferencing. These methods of communication could have been used for consultations in lieu of travel during the Ebola crisis

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<sup>6</sup> American Corners and American Spaces are open-access facilities used to engage foreign audiences overseas.

<sup>7</sup> Department Cable 2012 State 54144, "Information Resource Officers: Your Strategic Partners for Successful American Spaces," May 29, 2012.

The gap in IRO support, whether in-person or through other methods, left the embassy without advice and expertise on conducting outreach and information services that were cost-effective, of the highest quality, and consonant with the embassy's public diplomacy strategy. OIG advised the embassy to request regular IRO site visits.

## Consular Affairs

OIG reviewed consular operations, including immigrant and nonimmigrant visas, American citizens services, and consular anti-fraud programs. OIG found that in the year prior to the inspection, the Consular Section chief focused on addressing operational problems caused or exacerbated by the Ebola epidemic. These included eliminating immigrant visa processing backlogs, filling two vacancies on the five-member LE staff team, and conducting staff training on American citizen services. The Regional Consular Officer conducted a detailed review of consular operations in September 2016, and made 35 recommendations. Because the Consular Section chief was working to resolve the Regional Consular Officer's recommendations, those issues are not addressed in this report, with the exception of crisis preparedness.

### *Consular Crisis Preparedness did not Comply with Department Standards*

The Consular Section did not comply with Department standards for crisis preparedness. Consular staff did not know whether the section had a disaster kit containing the supplies, equipment and information a consular officer might need to function off-site in an emergency. LE staff members were unable to explain their roles in the event of an airplane crash or natural disaster. Only 2 of 11 consular staff members had completed the Foreign Service Institute's PC 120 Consular Task Force Basics, even though it is a required course for all consular staff. Guidance in 7 FAM 1800 provides information on planning for consular crisis management. The embassy reported that staffing shortages and its response to other priorities during the Ebola crisis prevented the section from maintaining crisis preparedness. Failure to comply with Department standards puts American citizens at risk in a major crisis.

**Recommendation 3:** Embassy Monrovia should comply with Department standards for consular crisis preparedness. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)

### *Embassy Lacked Shelter for Consular Clients*

The embassy had no shelter for consular clients who waited outside the embassy compound for appointments and to receive approved visas. The size of the consular waiting room, coupled with the arrival of consular clients hours before their appointments, made it impossible to accommodate all visitors in the waiting room. Moreover, the new embassy compound, occupied in 2011, did not include shelter for consular customers waiting in line, leaving them exposed to extreme weather conditions while waiting. This is inconsistent with guidance in 7 Foreign Affairs Handbook (FAH) 1 H281(a), which states that an effective consular section needs to provide secure, adequate, efficient, comfortable, and attractive accommodation for both visitors and staff.

**Recommendation 4:** Embassy Monrovia, in coordination with the Bureaus of Overseas Buildings Operations and Diplomatic Security, should provide accommodations to visa applicants in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Monrovia, in coordination with OBO and DS)

### *Visa Applicants Made Unnecessary Trips into the Consular Section*

When immigrant visa applicants did not present all required documents during the visa interview, they were instructed to make a separate appointment to drop off the documents inside the consular section. As a result, embassy guards screened clients entering the compound solely for the purpose of dropping off documents. OIG advised the Consular Section chief to staff the consular compound entrance visa/passport return window during specified hours to accept documents, eliminating unnecessary screening.

### *Standards for Genetic Testing were Applied Unevenly*

OIG found that officers' efforts to verify required biological relationships without genetic testing varied in technique and effectiveness. For example, some officers relied more on detailed questioning and common fraud detection techniques to obtain evidence of relationship while others recommended genetic testing if they did not feel "confident" of the relationship, even when they could not point to specific evidence of fraud. Still other officers reasoned that the high level of fraud in Liberia and the unreliability of civil documents necessitated genetic testing.

Immigrant visa adjudicators have the authority to recommend, but not require, that beneficiaries of petitions undergo genetic testing to prove they have the required biological relationship to petitioners. Guidance in 9 FAM 601.11-1(B)(2) states that "DNA technology is the only non-documentary method accepted for proof of a biological relationship. However, due to the expense, complexity, and logistical delays inherent in parentage testing, genetic testing should be done only when no other credible proof (documentation, photos, etc.) of the relationship exists."

In 2015, 293 applicants chose to undergo genetic testing. Of those tested, 15 percent were found not to have the required relationship. The cost per applicant for genetic testing at U.S.-based laboratories is approximately \$500. Notably, the per capita income in Liberia is \$455. Because the expense for genetic testing is borne by the applicants, OIG advised consular managers to remind adjudicators of the FAM policy that genetic testing should be used only when no other credible proof of the relationship exists. OIG also suggested that managers observe immigrant visa interviews more frequently, coach adjudicators in good interview techniques, and monitor case notes to ensure they properly document the necessity for testing.

## RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

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### Management Operations

OIG reviewed all management operations, including Facilities Management, Financial Management, General Services Operations, and Human Resources. As described below, OIG found 21 internal control deficiencies in the Management Section.

### Facilities Management

The new embassy compound, completed in 2011, includes the chancery, Marine security guard quarters, warehouse, and workshops. The old embassy compound, located 300 meters from the new site, includes 20 residential units, administrative buildings for other agency personnel, and the vacant former chancery.

#### *Sewage from U.S. Government-Owned Properties Flowed Into the Atlantic Ocean*

Untreated sewage from U.S. Government-owned residences and offices on the old embassy compound flows directly into the Atlantic Ocean. Specifically, seven sewer lines lead from six residences and four office buildings to the ocean below. This violates guidance in 15 FAM 912 (5), which includes standards for disposal of hazardous materials that may adversely impact the environment as well as standards addressing environmental health factors such as air and water pollution. Dumping raw sewage into the ocean qualifies as an environmental hazard under this guidance. The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations was unaware of this deficiency until the embassy reported it during the inspection.



**Figure 1:** A sewage line exiting from the old embassy compound to the Atlantic Ocean below. (OIG Photo)

**Recommendation 5:** The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, in coordination with Embassy Monrovia, should take prompt corrective action to treat sewage and waste water in

accordance with Department guidelines. (Action: OBO, in coordination with Embassy Monrovia)

### ***Fire Extinguishers Not Checked in Accordance With Department Guidelines***

The OIG inspection of fire extinguishers in embassy housing and offices found expired safety tags showing they were last checked in either 2011 or 2014. Fire extinguishers are critical life-safety equipment; from September 2014 until the time of the inspection, the embassy had 14 residential fires. According to 15 FAM 842, the embassy must visually inspect every fire extinguisher on a monthly basis to ensure operability and, at a minimum, service them annually. Embassy staff must record inspection and maintenance dates, either on the extinguisher inspection tag or electronically. Failure to conduct regular inspections of fire extinguishers increases the risk of staff injury or property damage in the event of a fire.

### ***Smoke Detectors Not Installed In Residences***

OIG visited eight residences during its housing tour and found that five lacked the required number and placement of smoke detectors. Per 15 FAM 841, post must install one single-station smoke alarm in each sleeping room, one in each corridor serving the sleeping rooms, and one at the top of the stairs on each level leading to the sleeping rooms. The facility management staff overlooked this requirement during their residential safety inspections. Lack of smoke detectors raises the risk of injury or property damage in the event of a fire. The embassy ordered 200 smoke detectors to address this deficiency.

### ***Multiple Safety Deficiencies Identified In Government-Owned and Leased Properties***

OIG found multiple safety, health, and environmental management deficiencies during its housing and office inspection. Deficiencies included a partially collapsed roof over the local guard changing room, a broken lock on the ambassador's residence swimming pool, no safety rails on the recreational center's stairs, no access restrictions on a guard tower, a rusted warehouse door that could collapse, a children's playground with inadequate surface materials, and residential balconies without a safety railing or with a railing of insufficient height. These deficiencies are inconsistent with guidance in 15 FAM 961, which requires each post abroad to implement a comprehensive safety and occupational health and environmental loss control program to protect personnel and capital assets and to meet environmental requirements. Facilities Management did not perform a comprehensive inspection and overlooked these deficiencies. Uncorrected safety, health and environmental deficiencies increase the risk of injury or loss of life. Upon identification, the facilities management staff took corrective action to address some of these deficiencies.

**Recommendation 6:** Embassy Monrovia should conduct a safety, health, environmental management inspection in accordance with Department guidelines and correct any deficiencies identified. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)

## Financial Management

### *Outstanding Travel Advances*

As of October 15, 2016, the Department's financial system open advance report showed 37 travel advances totaling \$54,403 at Embassy Monrovia. Approximately 34 of 37 travel advances were outstanding for more than 30 days, with 18 of these outstanding for more than 90 days. According to 4 FAM 465.1, each traveler is required to submit an expense report (voucher or claim) within 5 business days from the travel ending date to account for the travel performed and for the related authorized costs. If travelers do not submit their vouchers on time, the Financial Management Unit is responsible for debt collection as outlined in 4 FAM 492.1. According to FAM 493.1-3, in no case should a debt delinquent for 90 days remain at post. Management stated that collection of these debts became lax because of other priorities during the Ebola crisis and that many of the open advances were for invitational travelers, which were difficult to collect. Outstanding travel advances, however, represent a loss of funds to the Department and ultimately taxpayers if they remain uncollected. Any funds collected by clearing outstanding travel advances could be put to better use.

**Recommendation 7:** Embassy Monrovia should clear outstanding travel advances of \$54,403 in accordance with Department guidelines. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)

### *Alternate Cashiers Did Not Regularly Assume Principal Cashier's Duties*

Embassy Monrovia's alternate cashiers served as cashier only during periodic absences of the principal cashier. At the time of the inspection, the total authorized cash advance was \$275,000 including a temporary cash advance of \$75,000. The Department's Cashier Users Guide, however, states that the cashier supervisor should establish a schedule that allows the alternate cashier to work as acting principal cashier quarterly, assuming all cashier functions and operating the cashier database. This helps to ensure that the alternative cashier has the necessary skill to allow for continued cash operations during the absence of the principal cashier, thereby reducing errors due to inexperience. The financial management staff was unaware of this requirement. Failure to implement this internal control procedure increases the risk of theft and errors.

**Recommendation 8:** Embassy Monrovia should establish a schedule that allows alternate cashiers to work as the principal cashier in accordance with Department guidelines. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)

### *Supervisors did not Conduct Required Periodic Subcashier Reconciliations*

Five of 12 subcashier supervisors did not perform periodic reconciliations as required by 4 FAH-3 H-397.2-3(a). Failure to implement this internal control increases the risk of errors and that misuse of funds may go undetected.

**Recommendation 9:** Embassy Monrovia should implement standard operating procedures to require all subcashier supervisors to conduct regular unannounced cash verifications and monitor compliance. (Action Embassy Monrovia)

## General Services Operations

### *Travel*

#### *Embassy Incurred Additional Costs for Air Travel*

The embassy purchased airline tickets to the United States that were upgradeable to business class at a traveler out-of-pocket cost of \$205. These tickets cost more than other available tickets. For example, the travel agency quoted a round trip rest and recuperation ticket to the United States for \$7,555 with an upgrade to business class for \$205. For the same itinerary, the agency also quoted a full-fare flexible economy ticket for \$4,890. When Embassy Monrovia's leadership discovered the overpayments for airline tickets in June 2016, it put a stop to the practice. While the embassy stopped the practice, it had no plans to recover any funds from potential overpayments. OIG identified 24 examples of potential overpayment, but due to limitations on the records readily available for review during the inspection, OIG was unable to calculate a total dollar amount for these potential overpayments.

Department guidance<sup>8</sup> directs posts not to purchase more expensive fares to facilitate travel upgrades using cash or frequent flyer miles. Purchasing tickets at a higher-than-necessary price wastes U.S. Government funds. Any overpayments for airline tickets procured at a higher cost so employees could upgrade at a lower cost should be collected from the employees who benefitted and put to better use.

**Recommendation 10:** The Bureau of Comptroller and Global Financial Services should conduct an audit to determine how much Embassy Monrovia overpaid for airline tickets and, as appropriate, collect the overpayments from the employees who benefitted. (Action: CGFS)

### *Motor Pool*

#### *Some Drivers did not Complete Mandatory Smith System Driver Training*

Three chauffeurs and 13 incidental drivers did not complete mandatory Smith System driver safety training. Per 14 FAM 432.4, driver safety training is mandatory for all chauffeurs and incidental operators upon initial assignment of an official vehicle and at least every 2 years thereafter. Failing to provide proper training increases the risk of motor vehicle accidents. During the inspection, the Management Section scheduled training for chauffeurs and incidental drivers who had not completed the required Smith System driver training. Therefore, OIG did not make a recommendation.

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<sup>8</sup> Department Cable 2010 State 84236, "Travel Reminders," dated August 12, 2010.

### *Some Incidental Drivers Lacked Mandatory Medical Examinations*

The embassy had not completed medical exams and certifications for its 23 incidental drivers. Per 14 FAM 432.4, all incidental operators must successfully complete a medical exam and certification, good for up to 4 years, before being granted permission to drive an official vehicle. Management staff told OIG that this requirement was not followed due to lax internal controls during the Ebola crisis. Failure to conduct medical exams and certifications could lead to an increased risk of vehicle accidents. During the inspection, the embassy established and announced a schedule for medical exams for the incidental drivers.

### *Procurement*

#### *Embassy Lacked an Annual Acquisition Plan*

The General Services Unit did not establish an acquisition plan for FYs 2016 or 2017 even though 14 FAM 221.1 (b) requires it to do so. Embassy staff told OIG they did not develop such a planning tool because of other priorities. The lack of procurement planning decreases competition and the identification of cost savings and increases the risk of procuring unnecessary goods and services. OIG advised the embassy to conduct acquisition planning at the beginning of each fiscal year.

#### *LE Contracting Officer's Representatives Lacked Training and Designation*

OIG found that LE staff served as contracting officer's representatives without proper training or designation on 13 contracts totaling \$540,971. According to 14 FAH-2 H-143.2, the program office is responsible for providing a written nomination to the contracting officer for a technically qualified, responsible, and certified contracting officer's representative. In addition, 14 FAH-2 H-141 b. (4) and 14 FAH-2 H-143 state that the contracting officer must designate in writing a contracting officer's representative, while 14 FAH-2 H-143.1 states that all contracting officer's representatives must be certified and maintain their certification. Management staff did not enforce these requirements and did not recognize the importance of these internal controls. Failure to follow these requirements increases the risk of billing and contractual errors and incomplete contractor officer's representative files.

**Recommendation 11:** Embassy Monrovia should nominate, appoint, and train contracting officer's representatives in accordance with Department guidelines. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)

### *Personal Property Management*

#### *Inadequate Management Oversight of Bulk Fuel Operations*

The General Services Unit did not perform adequate oversight of its bulk fuel operations costing \$3.5 million annually. Inspectors found no documented spot checks of fuel deliveries, no tracking or calibration of pumps or fuel tanks, and no locks on the fuel tank located on the old embassy compound. The unit also had not performed an annual review of the fuel acquisition

plan to verify whether purchases of gasoline or diesel fuel matched requirements. Finally, during this inspection, the embassy awarded a contract for fuel pump and tank calibration but failed to include all pumps and tanks. These practices are inconsistent with Department guidance. According to 14 FAM 411.2-2, the Accountable Property Officer is responsible for the custody, care, and safekeeping of all property under control of the post. Guidance in 14 FAH-1 H-815.4 details the requirements for pumps and tanks to be inspected, calibrated, and secured. The General Services staff told OIG they were unaware of these requirements. Lack of oversight increases the risk of fuel theft or inaccurate fuel deliveries.

**Recommendation 12:** Embassy Monrovia should conduct bulk fuel operations in accordance with Department guidelines. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)

### *No Designated Receiving Area*

Embassy Monrovia used the warehouse entry as its informal receiving area, with no marking or formal designation as such, while the designated central receiving area was used for furniture storage. According to 14 FAM 413.2, the receiving activities of each establishment abroad must be centralized. When sub-receiving areas are designated, written standard operating procedures must include a method of informing the central receiving area of all receipts. Guidance in 14 FAH-1 H-312 recommends centralizing the receipt of goods in order to exercise greater control of U.S. Government property. The lack of a clearly marked receiving area increases the risk of confusion and property loss. OIG advised embassy staff to use the designated receiving area in accordance with Department guidelines.

### *General Services Staff did not Conduct Periodic Inventory Spot Checks*

The General Services Unit did not conduct spot checks of nonexpendable and expendable inventories. According to 14 FAM 411.2-2(c), the accountable property officer must personally conduct periodic, unannounced spot counts of expendable and nonexpendable property in warehouses to verify the accuracy of property records. Embassy staff told OIG that other priorities during the Ebola crisis precluded the unit from complying with this requirement. Failure to perform regular spot checks makes the embassy vulnerable to theft and hinders accurate accounting of inventory. OIG advised embassy staff to conduct periodic spot checks of nonexpendable and expendable inventories and maintain records of spot checks in accordance with Department guidelines.

### *Excessive Inventory in Warehouses and Former Office Buildings*

The embassy stored inventory in the former chancery, the former consular building, and in storage units as well as in the warehouse. During its inspection, OIG found many overstocked and obsolete items. For example, inspectors saw boxes of old records, broken engines, rusted concrete mixers, and excess furniture. Management staff told OIG that transfers of excess equipment from other agencies to the Department after the Ebola crisis contributed to the large inventory surplus. The property management report showed that staff identified property for sale or disposal worth \$1.04 million, although it was anticipated that the actual sales price would be lower given depreciation and the condition of many of the items. Prior to the inspection, the

embassy held 6 auctions, and the General Services Unit told OIG it planned additional auctions once the rainy season ended in November 2016. Although the auctions are an appropriate response to excess property, the property should not be allowed to accumulate to this extent. Per 14 FAH-1 H-711, property that is not required, or is in such a condition that economical repairs cannot be made, should not be allowed to accumulate in offices or warehouses. An excessive inventory creates an administrative burden for the property management staff, especially during the annual inventory reconciliation. Funds from the sale of items in the obsolete inventory could be put to better use.

**Recommendation 13:** Embassy Monrovia should sell or dispose of excess inventory in accordance with Department guidelines. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)

### *General Services Unit did not Complete Required Annual Utilization Surveys*

The General Services unit in FYs 2015 and 2016 did not conduct annual utilization surveys to ensure that personal property acquisition is limited to what is actually needed. For example, the embassy had \$1 million worth of appliances in its inventory but purchased an additional \$300,000 in appliances at the end of FY 2016. Per 14 FAM 411.2-2.b.(8), the accountable property officer is required to conduct an annual utilization survey to ensure that property is correctly assigned and cared for and to identify unneeded items for reassignment or return to stock. According to 14 FAM 412, personal property acquisition should be limited to the quantity and quality necessary for cost-effective and efficient U.S. Government business. The embassy told OIG that alternative priorities during the Ebola crisis precluded the accountable property officer from conducting the required surveys. Failure to conduct annual utilization surveys increases the risk of wasteful purchase and storage of inventory.

**Recommendation 14:** Embassy Monrovia should conduct an annual property utilization survey in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)

## Human Resources

### *Mechanics Performed Auto Repairs on Personally Owned Vehicles*

OIG found that Embassy Monrovia's LE staff mechanics performed after-hours auto repairs on U.S. direct-hire personally owned vehicles on government premises using equipment purchased for government-owned vehicles. According to 28 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Section 45.4 (a), employees may use Government property only for official business or as authorized by the U.S. Government. Management staff stated this type of arrangement was common at U.S. embassies in Africa and were unaware of any prohibition. The practice of LE staff mechanics repairing personally owned vehicles for U.S. direct-hire staff in this manner is an inappropriate use of government resources and an unsanctioned employment liability.

**Recommendation 15:** Embassy Monrovia should terminate the practice of allowing locally employed staff mechanics to perform auto repairs on personally owned vehicles on U.S. Government property or with U.S. Government equipment. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)

### ***Local Compensation Plan Did Not Comply with Liberia's Labor Law***

LE staff members told OIG that the human resource handbook for local employees and the local compensation plan did not comply with Liberia labor law. In June 2015, the Government of Liberia issued the "Decent Work Act 2015," which required employer compliance as of March 1, 2016. Guidance in 3 FAM 7224.2-1 (a), requires Foreign Service national personnel programs to conform as closely as feasible to local law and customs but be based on, and administered in accordance with, U.S. laws and regulations. Management stated that the handbook needed to be updated but other priorities during the Ebola crisis contributed to the delay in reviewing and implementing the changes. Without accurate policies and procedures, LE staff may not receive the benefits to which they are entitled.

**Recommendation 16:** Embassy Monrovia, in coordination with the Bureau of Human Resources, should update its local employee staff human resources handbook and local compensation plan to reflect the Government of Liberia's labor law. (Embassy Monrovia, in coordination with DGHR)

### ***No Department Approval for Medical Clinic for LE Staff***

In 2009, Embassy Monrovia established a health clinic to service acute needs, manage chronic illnesses, and treat emergencies for LE staff. The LE staff's medical insurance company, under a contract with the embassy, delivered the medical services in a building on the embassy compound. The embassy paid for the upkeep of the building and the utilities. While it is appropriate and common for an embassy to provide medical coverage for LE staff, such services are typically procured via a contract and delivered outside the embassy compound. OIG was unable to find any Department regulations or policies addressing the operation of a medical clinic on embassy premises. In addition, neither the embassy nor the Department were able to show OIG any documents with approval of this arrangement, in particular whether the Office of the Legal Adviser had opined on the clinic's creation. Operation of this facility on embassy premises could create a liability for the U.S. Government.

**Recommendation 17:** Embassy Monrovia should request a comprehensive legal review and opinion from the Office of the Legal Adviser about whether a building on the embassy compound can be used to operate a medical clinic for locally employed staff (Action: Embassy Monrovia)

### ***Inaccurate LE Staff Position Descriptions***

Approximately 11 percent of participants in the OIG pre-inspection survey of LE staff stated that their position descriptions were inaccurate. OIG found that the embassy had not revised some position descriptions since 2007. According to 3 FAH-2 H-441.4 b, American supervisors are responsible for ensuring that position descriptions accurately describe staff positions under their direction. In addition, 3 FAH-2 H-443 explains that the human resources officer is responsible for requesting amendments to position descriptions if existing descriptions are inaccurate and for conducting an annual review of all positions. Embassy management stated that this personnel

procedure became lax during the Ebola crisis. Inaccurate position descriptions could affect LE staff members' level of compensation and lower their morale. The Human Resources Officer acknowledged this deficiency and began a full review during the inspection.

### *Outdated Retail Price Survey*

Embassy Monrovia had not submitted a retail price survey—used to set the embassy's cost of living allowance as well as lodging and meals and incidental expenses rates—since January 2013. The last survey was due in January 2015. Per Department Standardized Regulation 228.2, the post allowance level is based on living costs in the foreign location relative to that of Washington, D.C. To ensure that the rates accurately reflect local costs, the Bureau of Administration Office of Allowances requires embassies to submit the retail price survey in January of odd-numbered years. Embassy management stated they overlooked this requirement. The absence of timely allowance reports increases the risk of inaccurate employee allowance and travel payments.

**Recommendation 18:** Embassy Monrovia should submit a retail price survey to the Bureau of Administration. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)

## **Information Management**

The Information Management (IM) Section delivers communications services for more than 360 computer users, along with telephone, radio, and pouch and mail services. OIG reviewed the security controls that prevent unauthorized access to the computer systems and the loss of sensitive information. OIG also examined the embassy emergency communications planning, the IT equipment inventories, telephone systems, and the pouch and mail programs. Embassy IM programs and services were in compliance with Department directive 5 FAM 120 except as described below.

During the inspection, the section corrected several issues identified by OIG. It reset outdated door lock combination codes, updated access lists for controlled spaces, placed a required secure storage container in the Alternate Command Center, and made a formal request for bi-annual inspections of the mail room by the Post Occupational Safety and Health Officer.

### *Section Leadership*

The Information Management Officer position experienced significant staffing gaps during the past 3 years. This lack of consistent leadership resulted in several shortcomings in the programs and controls having IM oversight. Most notably, the embassy had not resolved 23 recommendations made by the Bureau of Diplomatic Security in a November 2015 Computer Security Assessment. The IM Section neglected IT inventory controls until significant discrepancies became evident in 2015 and the Department required corrective actions. The embassy reconciled the IT inventory in 2016 without significant discrepancies.

The Information Systems Security Officer (ISSO) program also suffered from a lack of leadership. Designated ISSOs had no record of completed activities required by Department directives. A recent Communications Security audit required remedial action to reconcile IT deficiencies. OIG discussed these deficiencies with section staff and provided advice for prioritizing the section workload. OIG also provided advice to section staff on the deficiencies cited in this report.

### *Monthly Random Scans Not Done*

The embassy ISSOs did not perform required monthly random scans of user accounts, nor had they tracked activities or used a logbook. This is inconsistent with standards in 12 FAH-10 H-112.9-2, which require the ISSO to conduct monthly reviews of randomly selected user accounts to protect information and equipment from unauthorized software and hardware and to ensure users are not processing information above the authorized classification level for the system. Embassy ISSOs overlooked Department procedures to safeguard computer systems and information. Failure to perform the monthly random scans of user accounts can put sensitive Department information and equipment at risk for loss or damage.

**Recommendation 19:** Embassy Monrovia should perform and document reviews of randomly selected user accounts in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)

### *Laptops Were Not Encrypted in Accordance with Department Requirements*

OIG reviewed the embassy mobile computing program, including spot checks on four random devices, and found unencrypted laptops. IM staff was unaware of the requirement in Department Notice 2009-10-188<sup>9</sup> to encrypt all laptops. The Bureau of Diplomatic Security Computer Security Assessment, dated November 2015, also identified this deficiency. Unencrypted laptop computers can put sensitive Department information at risk for unauthorized access or loss.

**Recommendation 20:** Embassy Monrovia should encrypt all laptops in accordance with Department guidance. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)

### *No Local IT Configuration Control Board*

The embassy did not have a Local IT Configuration Control Board. The Bureau of Diplomatic Security Computer Security Assessment of November 2015 also identified this deficiency. IM section employees failed to take action on recommendations noted in that report. Department standards in 5 FAM 862.1 require that an embassy that maintains its own IT systems must establish a Local IT Configuration Control Board to ensure that the hardware, software, or network components installed on the local area networks do not adversely affect the existing

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<sup>9</sup> Department Notice 2009-10-188, "Unclassified and Sensitive But Unclassified Laptop Inventory and Encryption Responsibilities," October 29, 2009.

local IT infrastructure. The lack of a Local IT Configuration Control Board can put Department computer systems at risk of outages, loss of information, and damage to computer equipment.

**Recommendation 21:** Embassy Monrovia should establish and register a Local IT Configuration Control Board in compliance with Department guidance. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)

### *Unauthorized Software*

OIG found unauthorized software installed on Embassy Monrovia's unclassified computer systems. The Bureau of Diplomatic Security Computer Security Assessment, dated November 2015, also identified the unauthorized software. Guidance in 12 FAH-10 H-222.1-3 requires system administrators to install only software and hardware approved by the Department or Local Configuration Control Board. IM Section employees failed to take action on deficiencies noted in the November 2015 report. The installation of unauthorized software on Department computers puts sensitive information and IT equipment at risk of loss or damage.

**Recommendation 22:** Embassy Monrovia should remove unauthorized software from unclassified computer systems. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)

### *Dedicated Internet Networks Not Properly Registered*

The embassy had not registered its dedicated internet networks. OIG found that one network was not registered and another network's registration had expired in August 2015. In addition, the Wi-Fi capabilities of the two dedicated internet networks were not documented as required. Guidance in 5 FAM 872.1 requires that all dedicated internet networks be registered with the Enterprise IT Configuration Board and updated annually with complete technical information. IM section employees overlooked the requirement to register and provide current information on these networks to the Department. Failure to register dedicated internet networks and update the technical information increases the risk of outages, loss of data, and wasted resources as duplicate networks perform similar tasks.

**Recommendation 23:** Embassy Monrovia should register all dedicated internet networks in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)

### *LE Staff Lacked Information Assurance Training*

OIG found that four of five LE staff members in the Information Systems Center had not received appropriate Information Assurance training. Department standards in 12 FAM 623.5 state that personnel having significant information system security roles and responsibilities must be trained in this area. LE staff positions in the Information Systems Center are designated sensitive due to the significant roles they have in safeguarding computer systems and information. Untrained personnel with significant security roles create a risk for data loss and damage to IT equipment.

**Recommendation 24:** Embassy Monrovia, in coordination with the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, should train Information Management staff in accordance with Department guidance. (Action: Embassy Monrovia, in coordination with DS)

### *Incomplete and Untested IT Contingency Plan*

The embassy was unable to provide test logs or evidence that it had completed and tested its IT Contingency Plan. The Bureau of Diplomatic Security previously reported this in its November 2015 Computer Security Assessment. Department standards<sup>10</sup> state that every information system must have a contingency plan that is tested and updated each year for effectiveness and that essential mission functions and restoration priorities must be identified. Section managers overlooked contingency planning as a high priority task. Incomplete and untested IT Contingency Plans increase the risk of ineffective responses to, or loss of, critical information during an emergency or crisis situation.

**Recommendation 25:** Embassy Monrovia should review, update, and test the IT Contingency Plan in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)

### *Records Management Program*

Embassy staff were not fulfilling Records Management responsibilities. The embassy Post Records Coordinator was untrained, and its Records Management program was ineffective in training employees to fulfill records management responsibilities. Embassy Monrovia did not archive non-reporting cable information. Employees used informal emails regularly in the conduct of operations. Department standards in 5 FAM 414.8 require that all Department employees preserve documentary materials meeting the definition of a record under the Federal Records Act<sup>11</sup> through the use of record emails. The lack of a Records Management program increases the risk of loss of important data for historical insight into policy analysis, decision making, and archival research.

**Recommendation 26:** Embassy Monrovia, in coordination with the Bureau of African Affairs, should establish a Records Management Program which includes requiring all employees to complete appropriate Foreign Service Institute distance learning training courses. (Action: Embassy Monrovia, in coordination with AF)

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<sup>10</sup> 5 FAM 851 states that every information system must have a contingency plan that is developed, documented, and tested each year. 12 FAH-10 H-232.3-1 states that managers must test contingency plans annually for effectiveness and initiate corrective actions and update the plan as needed. 12 FAH-10 H-232.1-1 states that contingency plans must identify essential mission business functions and provide restoration priorities.

<sup>11</sup> 5 FAM 1214.3, 5 FAM 443.1, 5 FAM 443.2.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

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OIG provided a draft of this report to Department stakeholders for their review and comment on the findings and recommendations. OIG issued the following recommendations to Embassy Monrovia, the Bureau of Comptroller and Global Financial Services, and the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations. Their complete responses can be found in Appendix B. The Department also provided technical comments that OIG incorporated, as appropriate into this report.

**Recommendation 1:** Embassy Monrovia should implement formal standard operating procedures for conducting merit reviews and risk assessments of all grants proposals in accordance with Department guidance. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)

**Management Response:** In its May 4, 2017, response, Embassy Monrovia concurred with this recommendation. The embassy noted that all new grant review packages include a risk assessment checklist. The embassy also implemented a proposal review panel and designed a template to monitor grant activities.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation of the formal standard operating procedures for grant proposals.

**Recommendation 2:** The Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, in coordination with Embassy Monrovia, should conduct end-of-contract and end-of-phase impact evaluations immediately. (Action: INL, in coordination with Embassy Monrovia)

**Management Response:** In its May 4, 2017, response, Embassy Monrovia and INL Monrovia concurred with this recommendation. The embassy noted that it was coordinating with INL Washington to conduct end-of-contract evaluations. Additionally, INL inserted mid-point and end-of-contract evaluations in its current Civilian Police and Justice Sector contract.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation of the end-of-contract and end-of-phase evaluations.

**Recommendation 3:** Embassy Monrovia should comply with Department standards for consular crisis preparedness. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)

**Management Response:** In its May 4, 2017, response, Embassy Monrovia concurred with this recommendation. The embassy noted that it expected to be fully compliant by the end of FY 2017.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation of the embassy's compliance with Department consular crisis preparedness standards.

**Recommendation 4:** Embassy Monrovia, in coordination with the Bureaus of Overseas Buildings Operations and Diplomatic Security, should provide accommodations to visa applicants in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Monrovia, in coordination with OBO and DS)

**Management Response:** In its May 4, 2017, response, Embassy Monrovia concurred with this recommendation. The embassy noted that it had already identified a space to shelter visa applicants and, pending availability of funds from the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations and the Bureau of Consular Affairs, the project would be completed by the end of FY2017.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation of the accommodations.

**Recommendation 5:** The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, in coordination with Embassy Monrovia, should take prompt corrective action to treat sewage and waste water in accordance with Department guidelines. (Action: OBO, in coordination with Embassy Monrovia)

**Management Response:** In its April 24, 2017, response, the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations concurred with this recommendation. OBO noted that it will investigate cost-effective solutions to address the issue.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation of corrective action to treat the sewage and waste water in accordance with Department guidelines.

**Recommendation 6:** Embassy Monrovia should conduct a safety, health, environmental management inspection in accordance with Department guidelines and correct any deficiencies identified. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)

**Management Response:** In its May 4, 2017, response, Embassy Monrovia concurred with this recommendation. The embassy noted that the Office of Safety, Health, and Environmental Management inspected the embassy on April 25, 2016, and the embassy planned on closing out all recommendations from the inspection by the end of 2017.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation of the corrected deficiencies.

**Recommendation 7:** Embassy Monrovia should clear outstanding travel advances of \$54,403 in accordance with Department guidelines. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)

**Management Response:** In its May 4, 2017, response, Embassy Monrovia concurred with this recommendation. The embassy noted that the balance had been reduced to \$10,069 and the remainder would be cleared by May 2017.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation of the cleared outstanding travel advances.

**Recommendation 8:** Embassy Monrovia should establish a schedule that allows alternate cashiers to work as the principal cashier in accordance with Department guidelines. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)

**Management Response:** In its May 4, 2017, response, Embassy Monrovia concurred with this recommendation. The embassy noted that it created a 12-month schedule for the cashiers.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation of the alternate cashier schedule.

**Recommendation 9:** Embassy Monrovia should implement standard operating procedures to require all subcashier supervisors to conduct regular unannounced cash verifications and monitor compliance. (Action Embassy Monrovia)

**Management Response:** In its May 4, 2017, response, Embassy Monrovia concurred with this recommendation. The embassy noted that it created a standard operating procedure.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation of the standard operating procedure for unannounced cash verifications.

**Recommendation 10:** The Bureau of Comptroller and Global Financial Services should conduct an audit to determine how much Embassy Monrovia overpaid for airline tickets and, as appropriate, collect the overpayments from the employees who benefitted. (Action: CGFS)

**Management Response:** In its May 4, 2017, response, Embassy Monrovia concurred with this recommendation. The embassy noted that it discovered the overpayments for airline tickets in June 2016 and put a stop to the practice and received \$17,000 in refunds. Due to limitations on the records readily available for review during the inspection, OIG was unable to calculate a total dollar amount for the identified 24 potential overpayments. CGFS did not provide a formal response before the report publication deadline, but understands no response constitutes concurrence.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation of an audit by the Bureau of Comptroller and Global Financial Services and, if appropriate, collection of any overpayments from employees who benefitted.

**Recommendation 11:** Embassy Monrovia should nominate, appoint, and train contracting officer's representatives in accordance with Department guidelines. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)

**Management Response:** In its May 4, 2017, response, Embassy Monrovia concurred with this recommendation. The embassy noted it had reassigned contractor officer's representatives duties to employees that have current contracting officer's representative certification for all maintenance contracts. Additional contracts would be covered by incoming or newly trained employees with required certification.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation of trained and certified contracting officer's representatives.

**Recommendation 12:** Embassy Monrovia should conduct bulk fuel operations in accordance with Department guidelines. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)

**Management Response:** In its May 4, 2017, response, Embassy Monrovia concurred with this recommendation. The embassy noted that it implemented new procedures for conducting bulk fuel operations and was now using the correct Department Receiving and Inspection Report.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation of the revised bulk fuel operations procedures.

**Recommendation 13:** Embassy Monrovia should sell or dispose of excess inventory in accordance with Department guidelines. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)

**Management Response:** In its May 4, 2017, response, Embassy Monrovia concurred with this recommendation. The embassy noted that it held auctions in December 2016, and March and April 2017 to dispose of redundant items and dead stock.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation of the sold (with total sale value) or disposed excess inventory.

**Recommendation 14:** Embassy Monrovia should conduct an annual property utilization survey in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)

**Management Response:** In its May 4, 2017, response, Embassy Monrovia concurred with this recommendation. The embassy noted it conducted an annual property utilization survey on November 7, 2016.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation of the survey.

**Recommendation 15:** Embassy Monrovia should terminate the practice of allowing locally employed staff mechanics to perform auto repairs on personally owned vehicles on U.S. Government property or with U.S. Government equipment. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)

**Management Response:** In its May 4, 2017, response, Embassy Monrovia concurred with this recommendation. The embassy noted that it issued a Management Policy prohibiting the practice.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation of the Management Policy.

**Recommendation 16:** Embassy Monrovia, in coordination with the Bureau of Human Resources, should update its local employee staff human resources handbook and local compensation plan to reflect the Government of Liberia's labor law. (Embassy Monrovia, in coordination with DGHR)

**Management Response:** In its May 4, 2017, response, Embassy Monrovia concurred with this recommendation. The embassy noted that it submitted a request to Bureau of Human Resources/Office of Overseas Employment to amend the local compensation plan.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation of the updated documents.

**Recommendation 17:** Embassy Monrovia should request a comprehensive legal review and opinion from the Office of the Legal Adviser about whether a building on the embassy compound can be used to operate a medical clinic for locally employed staff (Action: Embassy Monrovia)

**Management Response:** In its May 4, 2017, response, Embassy Monrovia concurred with this recommendation. The embassy noted that it requested guidance from the Office of Legal Adviser and the Bureau of Human Resources/Office of Overseas Employment. Based on their responses, the embassy will close the clinic in May 2017.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation of the Office of Legal Adviser and Bureau of Human Resources' guidance on closing the clinic.

**Recommendation 18:** Embassy Monrovia should submit a retail price survey to the Bureau of Administration. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)

**Management Response:** In its May 4, 2017, response, Embassy Monrovia concurred with this recommendation. The embassy noted it was working on a service contract to perform the survey.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation of the retail price survey.

**Recommendation 19:** Embassy Monrovia should perform and document reviews of randomly selected user accounts in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)

**Management Response:** In its May 4, 2017, response, Embassy Monrovia concurred with this recommendation. The embassy noted that it made a schedule and started the reviews.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation of the reviews.

**Recommendation 20:** Embassy Monrovia should encrypt all laptops in accordance with Department guidance. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)

**Management Response:** In its May 4, 2017, response, Embassy Monrovia concurred with this recommendation. The embassy noted that as emergency Ebola staff departed, the Department of Defense gave the embassy laptops for disposition, but the embassy had never used them. The embassy is preparing the laptops for disposition in accordance with Department guidance.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation of the encryption of all laptops.

**Recommendation 21:** Embassy Monrovia should establish and register a Local IT Configuration Control Board in compliance with Department guidance. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)

**Management Response:** In its May 4, 2017, response, Embassy Monrovia concurred with this recommendation. The embassy noted the action was completed.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation of the registered Local IT Configuration Control Board.

**Recommendation 22:** Embassy Monrovia should remove unauthorized software from unclassified computer systems. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)

**Management Response:** In its May 4, 2017, response, Embassy Monrovia concurred with this recommendation. The embassy noted the unauthorized software was removed.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation of the removal of unauthorized software from unclassified computers.

**Recommendation 23:** Embassy Monrovia should register all dedicated internet networks in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)

**Management Response:** In its May 4, 2017, response, Embassy Monrovia concurred with this recommendation. The embassy noted it registered or was in the process of registering dedicated internet networks.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation of the registered dedicated internet networks.

**Recommendation 24:** Embassy Monrovia, in coordination with the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, should train Information Management staff in accordance with Department guidance. (Action: Embassy Monrovia, in coordination with DS)

**Management Response:** In its May 4, 2017, response, Embassy Monrovia concurred with this recommendation. The embassy noted it had requested funds and dates for training.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation of the completed training.

**Recommendation 25:** Embassy Monrovia should review, update, and test the IT Contingency Plan in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)

**Management Response:** In its May 4, 2017, response, Embassy Monrovia concurred with this recommendation. The embassy noted that as of April 18, 2017, the IT Contingency Plan was 95 percent complete.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation of the completed review and updated and tested contingency plan.

**Recommendation 26:** Embassy Monrovia, in coordination with the Bureau of African Affairs, should establish a Records Management Program which includes requiring all employees to complete appropriate Foreign Service Institute distance learning training courses. (Action: Embassy Monrovia, in coordination with AF)

**Management Response:** In its May 4, 2017, response, Embassy Monrovia concurred with this recommendation. The embassy noted that, as of March 28, 2017, a Records Management Program plan was in place and the embassy had increased its use of record emails.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation of the establishment of a Records Management Program and applicable training of mission personnel.

## PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS

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Title	Name	Arrival Date
<b>Chiefs of Mission:</b>		
Ambassador	Christine Elder	6/2016
Deputy Chief of Mission	Samuel Watson	8/2016
<b>Chiefs of Sections:</b>		
Management	Amy Hart Vrampas	8/2015
Consular	Jay Sorensen	9/2015
Political-Economic	Alexander Sokoloff	6/2015
INL	Amy Schmissey	10/2015
Public Affairs	Paul Hinshaw	7/2015
Regional Security	Kimberly Jones	8/2016
<b>Other Agencies:</b>		
Department of Defense	Col. E.J. Dupont	8/2015
U.S. Agency for International Development	Anthony Chan	9/2015
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	Desmond Williams	9/2015
Millennium Challenge Corporation	Kateri Clement	4/2016
Peace Corps	Kevin Fleming	3/2015

**Source:** Embassy Monrovia

## APPENDIX A: OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

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This inspection was conducted in accordance with the Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation, as issued in 2012 by the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency, and the Inspector's Handbook, as issued by OIG for the Department and the Broadcasting Board of Governors.

### Objectives and Scope

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

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

### Methodology

In conducting inspections, OIG uses a risk-based approach to prepare for each inspection; reviews pertinent records; reviews, circulates, and compiles the results of survey instruments, as appropriate; conducts interviews; and reviews the substance of the report and its findings and recommendations with offices, individuals, organizations, and activities affected by the review.

For this inspection, OIG reviewed 120 questionnaires. In Washington, OIG conducted 66 interviews with Department and other Government officials engaged in work in Liberia. At Embassy Monrovia, OIG conducted 108 interviews and physically inspected the 3 U.S. Government facilities that comprised the mission, along with the residences of the Ambassador, the DCM, Marine Security Guards, and 7 staff members.

## APPENDIX B: MANAGEMENT RESPONSES

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May 4, 2017

UNCLASSIFIED

TO: OIG – Sandra Lewis, Assistant Inspector General for Inspections  
THRU: AF Bureau – Peter Henry Barlerin   
FROM: Embassy Monrovia – Ambassador Christine Elder  
SUBJECT: Response to Draft OIG Report – October 2016 Inspection of Embassy Monrovia

Embassy Monrovia appreciates the guidance provided by the Office of the Inspector General in the 2016 inspection report. The Embassy recognizes that we remain in the recovery phase after hosting thousands of temporary U.S. official staff in support of the Government of Liberia's effort to overcome the crisis precipitated by the Ebola virus. Since the recovery, Post has worked to strengthen internal controls relaxed during the crisis, both in implementing regulatory processes and in stressing consensus on their importance. That process is ongoing as Post strengthens and enforces policies, including on many of the OIG recommendations, and liaises with Washington bureaus to provide funding, expertise, and authorization for newly identified mandates. Post also emphasized enhanced, on-site training of Locally-Employed (LE) staff to further reinforce the concepts of internal controls.

We appreciate that the OIG report substantiated the Embassy's robust and productive interagency collaboration, and also highlighted the Embassy's broad access, across all agencies, to host government and private sector officials. The Embassy will continue to use these contacts effectively to advocate and support good governance as Liberia's President concludes her second and final term in office and the country holds elections. We expect that Liberia will cement its place as a strong democratic partner, and supporter of American policies, on the continent.

Embassy Monrovia has reviewed the OIG Inspection report. Our initial responses show completion or significant progress on most recommendations. Post remains committed to taking steps to implement all of the recommendations and to seek funding to expedite completion where required. Post provides the following comments in response to the recommendations from OIG:

**OIG Recommendation 1: Embassy Monrovia should implement formal standard operating procedures for conducting merit reviews and risk assessments of all grants proposals in accordance with Department guidance. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)**

**Management Response:** PAS has taken note of the recommendation that its grant-making activity lacked a risk assessment component prior to award. All new grant review packages now include a risk assessment checklist to gauge the likelihood that a grant-funded project will be completed. Per the OIG's recommendation, the Public Affairs Section has also implemented a proposal review panel comprised of representatives from other sections. The group meets quarterly to review proposals and make recommendations for funding. Panel members follow a checklist to ensure that possible programs meet mission priorities. As for monitoring, while each grant's Awards Specifics includes monitoring elements, such as the frequency of reports or the inclusion of Embassy representatives in key events, the Public Affairs Section has designed a template to monitor grant activities in detail from the outset.

**OIG Recommendation 2: The Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, in coordination with Embassy Monrovia, should conduct end-of-contract and end-of-phase impact evaluations immediately. (Action: INL, in coordination with Embassy Monrovia.)**

**Management Response:** INL Monrovia is coordinating with INL Washington's contract management and measurement and evaluation staff to conduct end-of-contract evaluations for the two contracts referenced in the OIG recommendation. INL has already inserted a mid-point and end-of-contract evaluation requirement in its current Civilian Police and Justice Sector contract through its first modification. INL will ensure compliance with the INL Bureau SOPs for measurement and evaluation and as required make modifications for other contracts as required.

**OIG Recommendation 3: Embassy Monrovia should comply with Department standards for consular crisis preparedness. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)**

**Management Response:** Post accepts the recommendation and expects to be fully compliant by the end of FY17. During the OIG visit in October, 2016, the inspector reviewed 7 FAM 1800 and other appropriate criteria against the Consular Crisis Preparedness Scorecard indicators and identified the indicators that (1) are supported by specific binding criteria, and (2) the Consular Chief indicated Monrovia's Consular Section was not yet in compliance.

1. What percent of required consular officers can access the EAP at office and at home? All consular officers (100%) can access the EAP at the office. It will also be available at the Consular Command Center. The unclassified version is available online; RSO recommends against keeping a printed copy at home where domestic employees or personal visitors might have access, as the document is SBU.

2. What percent of required consular staff (all officers, ACS staff, ACS backups) have reviewed consular portions of the EAP? All officers, ACS staff, and ACS backups (100%) have reviewed consular portions of the EAP.
3. What percent of consular staff has completed the Consular Task Force (CTF) Basics (PC 120) Course: All consular staff (100%) have completed PC 120.
4. What percent of required staff has completed the Crisis Task Force Training (in Consular Apps Training Center) course? All required staff (100%) have completed the CTF Training.
5. When was the last Crisis Management and Consular Crisis Exercises (CME and CCE) last conducted? (The CCE is a recommended exercise. There are no specific mandatory criteria. The CME is required for primary and alternate members of the EAC every 24-30 months.) A post-wide CME was conducted in August, 2015. A CCE was conducted in January, 2017. Post plans the next ones in summer 2017 prior to the fall elections.
6. What percent could fully-trained backups increase ACS LE staff in a crisis? (Inspector's Note: The above is a subsection of 7 FAM 1812.3 which pertains to the ACS unit manager. Therefore, at least consular assistants and consular associates in the section should be trained as backups for the single ACS assistant. Since there is only one ACS LE staff member, at least one LE staff member from another unit of the section would need to be cross-trained.) ACS staff includes the ACS Officer (the Consular Chief), the Consular Associate, and an LE staff member. One officer and one LE staff member are cross-trained to assist as needed. Thus, fully-trained LE back-ups could increase ACS LE staff by 100% in a crisis.
7. Which of the following is accurate: "(1) Post has a list of necessary fly-away kit equipment; (2) Between 60% and 90% of required kits are in stock at post; (3) Everything on the list in (1) is on hand but will require more than 30 minutes to be packed and ready to go"? Post has a list of necessary kit equipment. Post is also procuring equipment not currently available at Post.
8. Does post have a consular laptop configured for a consular team heading to a disaster site? Post does not have a laptop. Procurement of a laptop is in progress.
9. Has post identified, equipped, and tested a Consular Command Center? Post has identified a Consular Command Center. Post is in the process of equipping it.
10. What percentage of consular officers have FOBs? Consular officers do not have FOBs; all have BlackBerrys, and live within walking distance of both the Consular Section and the proposed Consular Command Center. Post is researching best practices for FOB distribution and usage.
11. Does post have a Crisis Consular Staffing Shift Plan? Post has a draft Crisis Consular Staffing Shift Plan.

12. Does post have a crisis consular motor pool access protocol? No. The Consular Chief has discussed Motorpool's role in a crisis response with Motorpool dispatchers, however. Consular, in coordination with GSO, will draft a protocol.

**OIG Recommendation 4: Embassy Monrovia, in coordination with the Bureaus of Overseas Buildings Operations and Diplomatic Security, should provide accommodations to visa applicants in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Monrovia, in coordination with OBO and DS)**

**Management Response:** Post accepts the recommendation and intends to be fully compliant by the end of FY17, assuming the availability of funds from OBO and CA. The recommendation addresses two issues: shelter for applicants awaiting their visa appointments, and shelter for applicants waiting to receive their printed travel documents after successful interviews. Consular, in coordination with the Facilities Manager and Regional Security Officer, has identified a space and shelter on compound to shelter visa applicants in accordance with Department standards; Post considers this part of the recommendation completed as of March 28, 2017. Additionally, Consular, Facilities, and RSO are working together for an optimal solution (considering both security and shelter) at the pass back window to protect applicants from the elements while waiting to receive their approved travel documents.

**OIG Recommendation 5: The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, in coordination with Embassy Monrovia, should take prompt corrective action to treat sewage and waste water in accordance with Department guidelines. (Action: OBO, in coordination with Embassy Monrovia)**

**Management Response:** Embassy Monrovia accepts this recommendation and OBO will investigate solutions to address the issue.

**OIG Recommendation 6: Embassy Monrovia should conduct a safety, health, environmental management inspection in accordance with Department guidelines and correct any deficiencies identified. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)**

**Management Response:** The Embassy accepts this recommendation. Facility Management incorporated recurring inspection of safety items, including smoke and fire extinguishers, with the regular Preventive Maintenance done at residences. In addition, the Office of Safety, Health, Environmental Management (SHEM) inspected the Embassy on April 25, 2016. To date, all priority three recommendations are completed; five of 11 priority two recommendations are completed; and seven of eight priority one recommendations are completed. Facilities plans to close out the remaining recommendations by the end of 2017.

**OIG Recommendation 7: Embassy Monrovia should clear outstanding travel advances of \$54,403 in accordance with Department guidelines.**

**Management Response:** Embassy Monrovia accepts the recommendation. The outstanding balance is now reduced from \$54,403 to \$10,069 USD. FMO anticipates closing the remaining advances by the end of May 2017.

**OIG Recommendation 8:** Embassy Monrovia should establish a schedule that allows alternate cashiers to work as the principal cashier in accordance with Department guidelines.

**Management Response:** Embassy Monrovia accepts the recommendation and has created a 12-month schedule.

**OIG Recommendation 9:** Embassy Monrovia should implement standard operating procedures to require all subcashier supervisors to conduct regular unannounced cash verifications and monitor compliance.

**Management Response:** Embassy Monrovia accepts the recommendation and has created the SOP.

**OIG Recommendation 10:** The Bureau of Comptroller and Global Financial Services should conduct an audit to determine what Embassy Monrovia overpaid for airline tickets and if appropriate, collect any overpayments from the employees who benefitted. (Action: CGFS).

**Management Response:** Embassy Monrovia accepts this recommendation, and wishes to highlight the following: the Embassy purchased airline tickets to the United States that were upgradeable to business class at a traveler out-of-pocket cost of \$205. These tickets cost more than other available tickets. For example, the travel agency quoted a round trip rest and recuperation ticket to the United States for \$7,555 with an upgrade to business class for \$205. For the same itinerary, the agency also quoted a full-fare flexible economy ticket for \$4,890. When Embassy Monrovia's leadership discovered the overpayments for airline tickets in June 2016, it put a stop to the practice. Subsequently post negotiated repayments from the travel agents in early October and received \$17,000 in refunds soon afterwards. OIG identified 24 examples of potential overpayment, but due to limitations on the records readily available for review during the inspection, OIG was unable to calculate a total dollar amount for these potential overpayments.

Department guidance<sup>1</sup> directs posts not to purchase more expensive fares to facilitate travel upgrades using cash or frequent flyer miles. Purchasing tickets at a higher-than-necessary price wastes U.S. Government funds. Any overpayments for airline tickets procured at a higher cost so employees could upgrade at a lower cost should be collected from the employees who benefitted and put to better use.

<sup>1</sup> Cable 2010 State 84236, "Travel Reminders," dated August 12, 2010.

**OIG Recommendation 11: Embassy Monrovia should nominate, appoint, and train contracting officer's representatives in accordance with Department guidelines. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)**

**Management Response:** The Embassy accepts this recommendation and reassigned COR duties to employees that have current COR certification for all its maintenance contracts. Post has one incoming employee who was COR certified in January 2017 who will take over the CDC contracts, and another employee currently finishing her COR certification who will take over the IT-related contracts. She expects to finish her training by April 2017. The Embassy is actively seeking training dates for additional employees who might have COR duties in the future. In the meantime, future contracts will only have CORs assigned that have completed the requisite COR training.

**OIG Recommendation 12: Embassy Monrovia should conduct bulk fuel operations in accordance with Department guidelines. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)**

**Management Response:** The Embassy accepts this recommendation and implemented new procedures for conducting bulk fuel operations. Previously, for the receipt of bulk fuel, post used the NEC and Benson Fuel report rather than the DS-127 Receiving and Inspection Report. Post has already begun using DS-127.

**OIG Recommendation 13: Embassy Monrovia should sell or dispose of excess inventory in accordance with Department guidelines. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)**

**Management Response:** The Embassy accepts this recommendation. The Embassy held auctions on December 11, 2016, March 18, 2017, and April 8, 2017. One more auction is planned for April 2017. Post will continue to hold auctions to dispose of redundant items and dead stock, consulting ILMS' data on property utilization to ensure post maintains proper inventory levels.

**OIG Recommendation 14: Embassy Monrovia should conduct an annual property utilization survey in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)**

**Management Response:** The Embassy uses a variety of ILMS data reports to track inventory utilization on a regular basis. GSO conducted an annual property utilization survey on 11/7/2016.

**OIG Recommendation 15: Embassy Monrovia should terminate the practice of allowing locally employed staff mechanics to perform auto repairs on personally owned vehicles on**

**U.S. Government property or with U.S. Government equipment. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)**

**Management Response:** The Embassy accepts this recommendation and ceased the practice of allowing LE staff mechanics to perform repairs on POVs on Embassy property or with USG owned equipment effective March 30, 2017. Management disseminated the new policy via a Management Policy on March 29, 2017.

**OIG Recommendation 16: Embassy Monrovia, in coordination with the Bureau of Human Resources, should update its local employee staff human resources handbook and local compensation plan to reflect the Government of Liberia's labor law. (Embassy Monrovia, in coordination with DGHR)**

**Management Response:** Embassy Monrovia accepts the recommendation and submitted a request to amend the LCP to HR/OE on March 13, 2017. The request included documentation outlining changes in the Local Labor Law and the Embassy's proposal to comply. The request was vetted through all agencies prior to submission to HR/OE.

**OIG Recommendation 17: Embassy Monrovia should request a comprehensive legal review and opinion from the Office of the Legal Advisor about whether a building on the embassy compound can be used to operate a medical clinic for locally employed staff. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)**

**Management Response:** Embassy Monrovia accepts the recommendation and requested guidance from the Office of the Legal Advisor on November 7, 2016. The request was received and distributed to a number of different L offices for responses. The Office of Legal Affairs also suggested that the Embassy consult HR/OE which was done November 25, 2016. On March 30, 2017, HR/OE provided final guidance that the LE clinic is not authorized. Management informed the LE Committee that the clinic will close in May 2017.

**OIG Recommendation 18: Embassy Monrovia should submit a retail price survey to the Bureau of Administration. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)**

**Management Response:** The Embassy accepts the recommendation and is currently working on a service contract to perform the survey.

**OIG Recommendation 19: Embassy Monrovia should perform and document reviews of randomly selected user accounts in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)**

**Management Response:** The Embassy accepts the recommendation. Each week users will be reviewed according to their last name as follows. The action is ongoing.

Week 1: A, B, C, D, E, & F

Week 2: G, H, I, J, K, L  
Week 3: M, N, O, P, Q, R  
Week 4: S, T, U, V, W, X, Y & Z

**OIG Recommendation 20: Embassy Monrovia should encrypt all laptops in accordance with Department guidance. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)**

**Management Response:** As emergency Ebola staff departed, the Embassy was given laptops by DoD for disposition. Post has never used these laptops and is “wiping” the drives and sending them to GSO for disposition.

**OIG Recommendation 21: Embassy Monrovia should establish and register a Local IT Configuration Control Board in compliance with Department guidance. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)**

**Management Response:** The Embassy accepts this recommendation and complied. Reference Monrovia document dated March 28, 2017.

**OIG Recommendation 22: Embassy Monrovia should remove unauthorized software from unclassified computer systems. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)**

**Management Response:** The Embassy accepts this recommendation and has complied for all Department of State equipment.

**OIG Recommendation 23: Embassy Monrovia should register all dedicated internet networks in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)**

**Management Response:** The Embassy accepts this recommendation. One DIN is approved with Registration ID 792. The second DIN, at the Marine House, has wireless network. The Embassy is working to register the second DIN.

**OIG Recommendation 24: Embassy Monrovia, in coordination with the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, should train Information Management staff in accordance with Department guidance. (Action: Embassy Monrovia, in coordination with DS)**

**Management Response:** The Embassy accepts this recommendation and requests funds to comply. IRM staff are identifying training dates for review.

**OIG Recommendation 25: Embassy Monrovia should review, update, and test the IT Contingency Plan in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Monrovia)**

**Management Response:** The Embassy accepts this recommendation. As of April 18, 2017, the IT Contingency Plan is 95% complete.

**OIG Recommendation 26: Embassy Monrovia, in coordination with the Bureau of African Affairs, should establish a Records Management Program which includes requiring all employees to complete appropriate Foreign Service Institute distance learning training courses. (Action: Embassy Monrovia, in coordination with AF)**

**Management Response:** The Embassy accepts this recommendation. As of March 28, 2017, a records plan is in place and only requires data for the latest new hire. In addition, the Embassy is increasing its use of record e-mails for long-term conservation of information.

Point of Contact for this report is Amy Vrampas.



United States Department of State  
Washington, D.C. 20520

APR 24 2017

**UNCLASSIFIED**  
**MEMORANDUM**

TO: OIG/ISP – Ms. Sandy Lewis

FROM: OBO/RM – Jürg E. Hochuli 

SUBJECT: Response to Draft OIG Report – Inspection of Embassy Monrovia

OBO has reviewed the draft OIG Inspection report. We provide the following comments in response to the recommendation provided by OIG:

**OIG Recommendation 5:** The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, in coordination with Embassy Monrovia, should take prompt corrective action to treat sewage and waste water in accordance with Department guidelines. (Action: OBO, in coordination with Embassy Monrovia).

**OBO Response:** OBO accepts this recommendation. OBO will investigate the cost effective solutions to address the sewage and waste water issue in Monrovia. Once a solution is identified, OBO will enter the requirement into BMIS to compete with other world-wide priorities for funding and project execution. OBO cannot provide a timeline to comply with this recommendation until a solution is identified, the requirement is scored in BMIS, and funds are made available.

The point of contact for this memorandum is Amy Gertsch.

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## APPENDIX C: FY 2015 STAFFING AND FUNDING BY AGENCY

Agency	U.S. Direct-hire Staff	U.S. Locally Employed Staff	Foreign National Staff	Total Staff <sup>12</sup>	Funding (\$)
<b>Department of State</b>					
Diplomatic & Consular Programs	17	3	13	33	1,146,200
Consular	4	2	5	11	326,137
International Cooperative Administrative Support System (ICASS)	9	12	253	274	17,176,567
Public Diplomacy	2	1	7	10	526,700
Diplomatic Security	3	1	0	4	442,489
Marine Security	8	0	3	11	62,886
Representation	0	0	0	0	35,925
Overseas Buildings Operations	0	0	0	0	1,777,817
INL	2	1	2	5	10,733,755
Subtotal	45	20	283	348	32,228,476
<b>Department of Defense</b>					
Defense Attaché Office	4	0	1	5	65,653
Office of Defense Cooperation	4	0	4	8	458,420
Coast Guard	1	0	0	1	68,000
Subtotal	9	0	5	14	592,073
USAID	48	0	56	104	150,898,095
President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR)	0	0	0	0	198,105
HHS-Centers for Disease and Prevention (Global Health Security)	9	0	13	22	2,911,367
HSS - Health Resources And Services Administration (HR&SA) <sup>13</sup>	1	0	0	1	0
Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance	3	0	0	3	2,162,094
Peace Corps	3	0	1	4	1,761,567
Millennium Challenge Corporation <sup>14</sup>	2	0	3	5	0

<sup>12</sup> Authorized positions.

<sup>13</sup> Although HHS-HS&SA was authorized positions at the embassy, it was not present in FY 2015.

<sup>14</sup> Although the Millennium Challenge Corporation was authorized positions at the embassy, it was not present in FY 2015.

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Agency	U.S. Direct-hire Staff	U.S. Locally Employed Staff	Foreign National Staff	Total Staff <sup>12</sup>	Funding (\$)
<b>Subtotal</b>	66	0	73	139	157,931,228
<b>Total</b>	115	20	361	501	190,751,777

**Source:** Generated by OIG from data provided by the Department.

## ABBREVIATIONS

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CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
DCM	Deputy Chief of Mission
Department	Department of State
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunity
FAH	Foreign Affairs Handbook
FAM	Foreign Affairs Manual
ICS	Integrated Country Strategy
IM	Information Management
INL	Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs
IRO	Information Resource Officer
ISSO	Information Systems Security Officer
LE	Locally Employed
PAS	Public Affairs Section

## OIG INSPECTION TEAM MEMBERS

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John Philibin, Team Manager  
Jonathan Farrar, Executive Direction  
David Becker  
John Bush  
Brent Byers  
Laura Faux-Gable  
Todd Fontaine  
Sarah Hall  
Colwell Whitney  
Timothy Wildy  
Timothy Williams

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