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Office of Inspector General  
United States Department of State

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ISP-I-19-20

Office of Inspections

July 2019

# Inspection of Embassy Paramaribo, Suriname

BUREAU OF WESTERN HEMISPHERE AFFAIRS

UNCLASSIFIED



# HIGHLIGHTS

Office of Inspector General  
United States Department of State

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## What OIG Inspected

OIG inspected the executive direction, program and policy implementation, and resource management operations of Embassy Paramaribo.

## What OIG Recommends

OIG made 18 recommendations: 17 to Embassy Paramaribo and 1 to the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations.

In its comments on the draft report, the Department concurred with 17 recommendations and disagreed with 1. OIG considers the 18 recommendations resolved. The Department's response to each recommendation, and OIG's reply, can be found in the Recommendations section of this report. The Department's formal written responses are reprinted in their entirety in Appendix B.

July 2019

OFFICE OF INSPECTIONS

BUREAU OF WESTERN HEMISPHERE AFFAIRS

## Inspection of Embassy Paramaribo, Suriname

### What OIG Found

- Embassy Paramaribo, between ambassadors at the time of the inspection, was led by a Chargé d'Affaires, who was accessible and visible throughout the embassy. He set a positive tone for the embassy and communicated his priorities well.
- The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations had not repaired leaks in the roofs of the chancery and warehouse on the new embassy compound, which were creating a health hazard for employees because of the mold that had formed.
- The embassy had multiple internal control deficiencies in general services, facilities management, human resources, and financial management operations.
- Embassy Paramaribo did not meet requirements for its local compensation plan, which resulted in incorrect salaries and retirement contributions for 32 locally employed staff.
- The embassy operated two wireless networks without the security controls necessary to protect the Department of State's networks and prevent the potential compromise of information.
- Spotlight on Success: Embassy Paramaribo hosted a conference for all International Law Enforcement Academy course graduates from the previous year to provide feedback on what they learned and how they put their new skills to work.
- Spotlight on Success: The Public Diplomacy Section successfully used a film festival to reach a large audience on a variety of issues, ranging from religious freedom to civil rights to women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics fields, and other aspects of U.S. society and culture.

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## CONTEXT

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The Republic of Suriname is a stable, free-market democracy located in northern South America, bordering the North Atlantic Ocean, between French Guiana and Guyana. It is the smallest independent country on the South American continent. Suriname's population is concentrated along the northern coastal strip; the remainder of the country is sparsely populated. The population is estimated to be approximately 592,000, primarily comprised of Creoles (persons of mixed African and European heritage), Maroons (the descendants of escaped African slaves), and the descendants of Indian and Indonesian contract workers. Suriname still is strongly influenced by The Netherlands—from which it peacefully gained its independence in 1975—because most Surinamese have relatives living there and it is Suriname's largest supplier of development aid.

Following independence, Johan Ferrier, the colonial governor, became president without a national election. Desire Delano Bouterse seized power in a military coup in February 1980. There was a brief civil war in 1986 and, in 1987, Bouterse allowed the approval of a new constitution and called for open elections. In 1992, Suriname amended its constitution to prohibit governing authority by the military. Several of today's democratically elected leaders, such as President Bouterse, who was elected in 2010 and re-elected in 2015, are former coup leaders. In 1999, Bouterse was convicted in absentia of drug trafficking in the Netherlands, and his son is incarcerated in the United States for the same and other offenses.

Embassy Paramaribo's 2018 Integrated Country Strategy (ICS), submitted to the Department on August 23, 2018, includes four goals:

- Strengthen citizen security, national institutions, and democratic governance.
- Expand economic opportunity and prosperity.
- Establish Suriname as a more cooperative partner in the region.
- Create a public opinion environment that supports U.S. policy initiatives.

At the time of the inspection, Embassy Paramaribo had approximately 96 positions which were filled by 17 direct-hire Americans, 6 eligible family members, and 73 locally employed (LE) staff. The Department of Defense, the only other agency present, is represented by the Military Liaison Office. The embassy moved into a new embassy compound in 2016 and was in the process of selling the former chancery building at the time of the inspection.

OIG evaluated the embassy's policy implementation, resource management, and management controls consistent with Section 209 of the Foreign Service Act.<sup>1</sup> A related classified inspection report discusses the embassy's security program and issues affecting the safety of mission personnel and facilities, as well as one issue related to the embassy's information management operations.

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

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTION**

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OIG assessed embassy leadership on the basis of 30 interviews that included comments on Front Office performance, staff questionnaires, and OIG's review of documents and observations of embassy meetings and activities during the course of the on-site portion of the inspection.

### **Tone at the Top and Standards of Conduct**

The former Ambassador departed post in August 2018, just prior to the start of the inspection. The Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM), serving as Chargé d'Affaires (Chargé), led the embassy during the inspection. The Chargé arrived in August 2016; he previously served as Management Counselor at Embassy Oslo, Norway.

OIG found the Chargé set a positive and professional tone for the embassy, consistent with Department of State (Department) leadership principles in 3 Foreign Affairs Manual (FAM) 1214. American and LE staff members, in both interviews and questionnaires, told OIG that both the Chargé and the former Ambassador clearly communicated the embassy's ICS priorities and the U.S. Government's overarching National Security Strategy goal of making the United States more secure and prosperous. This was done during town halls, country team meetings, and introductory meetings with all new staff. In addition, OIG found that, during his tenure, the Chargé clearly communicated his expectations to embassy sections and agencies.

Embassy staff said the positive tone at the top set by the Chargé and the former Ambassador contributed to high morale and a cooperative working environment. Staff consistently told OIG that the Chargé was accessible and visible throughout the embassy, which they appreciated, describing his habit of walking around the chancery and interacting with both American and LE staff. He also emphasized to staff that his door was open to everyone, and "he meant it," as one employee noted. OIG observed that the Chargé regularly ate lunch in the embassy cafeteria with other employees, and regularly visited the Consular Section and observed visa interviews.

The Chargé promoted LE staff inclusion and participation in embassy activities. For example, both as DCM and as Chargé, he held periodic meetings with the LE Staff Council to hear its concerns. LE staff told OIG the Chargé was interested in their concerns and open to their comments. They believed he and the American staff were doing what was possible to resolve several pay and retirement issues, and they were appreciative of his efforts. However, they said they did not always receive adequate feedback on the embassy's progress in resolving the problems. Problems with the embassy's local compensation plan, which affect the LE staff, are discussed further in the Resource Management section of this report.

### **Equal Employment Opportunity Program**

The embassy's Equal Employment Opportunity program met the requirements of 3 FAM 1514.2. The Chargé and the former Ambassador appropriately emphasized to embassy staff the importance of Equal Employment Opportunity and diversity principles, which are especially

relevant in this multi-ethnic country. The LE Staff Council reported a positive work environment and raised no related issues. OIG advised the Chargé to post program notices and references in embassy areas where they are likely to be read, which he agreed to do.

## **Execution of Foreign Policy Goals and Objectives**

OIG found that the Chargé and the former Ambassador promoted Embassy Paramaribo's 2018 ICS goals of assisting Suriname's economic development and furthering good governance in order to make Suriname a more effective international partner in the region. Specifically, they fulfilled their responsibilities under 2 FAM 113.1 to develop relations with Surinamese Government officials, establish relations with leaders from all levels of society, maintain contact with international representatives, and attend host-country representational events. The former Ambassador met with Suriname's president two or three times per year. He generally met with the Foreign Minister monthly and held frequent telephone conversations with him. He also met regularly with key members of the cabinet. However, OIG found the former Ambassador did not host many representational events.

## **Adherence to Internal Controls**

Embassy Paramaribo prepared its FY 2018 Annual Chief of Mission Management Control Statement of Assurance and submitted it to the Department in September 2018, in accordance with 2 FAM 024. The Management Officer coordinated the embassy's internal control review process and consulted with section heads for their input. The former Ambassador reviewed the statement prior to approving it, in accordance with 2 FAM 022.7(2). The Statement of Assurance identified two significant material weaknesses: the lack of a Marine Security Guard contingent (a weakness also included in the embassy's FY 2017 statement) and problems with the LE staff pension plan (see the Resource Management section of this report).

During the course of the inspection, OIG identified additional internal control deficiencies that are discussed later in this report. The Chargé told OIG the Florida Regional Center (FRC)<sup>2</sup> provided insufficient support on administrative issues and, as a result, embassy staff were overextended. FRC's new regional Human Resources Officer was visiting the embassy at the time of the inspection, and the Chargé told OIG that, based on staff comments, he was optimistic the center's support would improve.

The Chargé carried out regular reviews of the Consular Section chief's non-immigrant visa adjudications, as required by 9 FAM 403.12.

## **Security and Emergency Planning**

OIG determined that the Chargé and the former Ambassador conducted their security responsibilities in accordance with 12 Foreign Affairs Handbook (FAH)-1 H-721. They both

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<sup>2</sup> Public Law 108-447 empowers the Department to deliver services through regional hubs like FRC to enhance operational efficiency and to reduce overseas staffing where possible. Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2005, Pub. L. No. 108-447.

participated fully in security drills and regular radio checks. They discussed security developments during country team meetings and their guidance to the Regional Security Officer and embassy employees emphasized that the mission must be prepared for any security or emergency contingency. The Chargé met weekly with the Regional Security Officer and chaired the embassy's Emergency Action Committee, which is responsible for embassy emergency preparedness. OIG's complete assessment of the embassy's security and emergency preparedness programs are discussed further in the related classified report.

## **Developing and Mentoring Foreign Service Professionals**

The Chargé effectively oversaw the mission's First- and Second-Tour employee development program, which included three Department employees, in accordance with 3 FAM 2242.4. Recent topics for the program's 2018 monthly brown-bag lunches included writing effective Employee Evaluation Reports, bidding tips, time management, and a general question and answer session with the Chargé. The program's participants told OIG the Chargé made these meetings a priority, prompted them to propose meeting topics, and often developed handouts for the employees' use. They also told OIG the Chargé emphasized he was always available for individual mentoring.

## **POLICY AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION**

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OIG assessed Embassy Paramaribo's policy and program implementation through a review of the Political-Economic Section's advocacy and analysis work, as well as its counternarcotics and law enforcement efforts. OIG also assessed the Public Diplomacy Section's efforts and the Consular Section's provision of American citizen and visa services. OIG found the embassy generally met Department requirements for policy and program implementation, with the exceptions noted below.

### **Political and Economic Section**

OIG reviewed the Political-Economic Section's leadership and management, policy implementation, reporting and advocacy, commercial promotion, program implementation and grants, Leahy vetting, end-use monitoring, and foreign assistance functions. It found all of these to be in compliance with Department standards. However, OIG found that the embassy neglected its contact development program, as detailed below.

#### ***Political-Economic Section Generally Advanced Integrated Country Strategy Goals***

OIG found the embassy generally fulfilled its advocacy and reporting responsibilities in accordance with ICS goals. OIG reviewed 7 months of reporting cables and found them to be adequately sourced, timely, and relevant to ICS goals. Furthermore, the new section chief, who arrived 2 months prior to this inspection, tied planned reporting cables to ICS goals and intended to have section staff travel to cover issues outside the capital. However, OIG noted that only 5 percent of cables could be considered in-depth analytical cables, while the remainder included spot reports, reports of meetings, or demarches. According to 2 FAM

113.1c(10), Foreign Service missions are to observe, analyze, and report significant political, economic, and societal developments occurring abroad. OIG advised the embassy to decrease spot and meeting reports and increase output of analytical cables, particularly topics tied to ICS goals or analyses of the embassy's progress on its ICS objectives. The section chief agreed and began adjusting the reporting plans during the inspection.

***Political-Economic Section Neglected Contact Development***

OIG found that the Political-Economic Section did not fully develop contacts across a broad range of Surinamese society. OIG's analysis of calendars and representation and travel vouchers showed limited new contact development activity by section staff. Some embassy staff told OIG the embassy tightly held its representational funding until after the annual July 4 event, which consumed more than 50 percent of the funds. As a result, employees said there was little time or money in the fiscal year to travel or conduct representational events. Other section staff members told OIG project implementation, mandatory reporting, and routine business interfered with effective contact development. Finally, unlike the relationships that the Chargé and the former Ambassador had been able to cultivate with Suriname's president and Foreign Minister, staff said their contacts with working-level government officials were constrained due to the officials' unwillingness to engage with American diplomats. However, without established relationships with significant elements of society across the country, the section risked not being able to anticipate social and economic change or actions by the government or other elements of society. OIG advised, and the Political Economic section agreed, to dedicate more time to develop relationships across a broad range of Surinamese society.

***Political-Economic Section Priorities for Local Employees Unclear***

OIG found that two LE Political-Economic staff members also performed duties for the Public Diplomacy Section. The resulting split structure created confusion and unclear prioritization of responsibilities for LE staff. Department guidelines<sup>3</sup> indicate that the lack of a clear chain of command increases problems associated with establishing clear delegation of responsibility and authority, transmission of information, workflow, clearances, operational costs, and morale. This arrangement was a holdover from when the Public Diplomacy Section first was created and the newly assigned Public Diplomacy Officer needed LE staff support. OIG advised, and the embassy agreed, to realign LE staff position descriptions and duties to simplify reporting relationships and clarify staff responsibilities.

***Embassy Conducted Leahy Vetting in Accordance With Department Standards***

OIG's review of Embassy Paramaribo's processing of 496 Leahy vetting<sup>4</sup> cases from January 2017 to September 2018 found they were handled in accordance with Department guidelines.

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<sup>3</sup> 1 FAM 014.5a, 1 FAM 014.5d, and 1 FAM 014.1a.

<sup>4</sup> The Leahy Amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 prohibits the Department 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 USC 2378d.



Timely vetting ensured that Department funding was not used to train individuals or security units identified as having committed gross violations of human rights.

***Political-Economic Section Managed the International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Program***

Because the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) did not assign staff to Embassy Paramaribo, the Political-Economic Section managed \$2.2 million in foreign assistance INL had committed for Suriname since 2010. These projects supported the embassy's ICS objective to "strengthen citizen security, national institutions, and democratic governance." OIG reviewed INL's FY 2014 to FY 2018 programming to evaluate end-use monitoring program metrics, grants and contract management, and the Political-Economic Section's management of INL's program.

***Embassy Lacked Appropriate Metrics for Law Enforcement-Related Projects***

Embassy Paramaribo lacked appropriate metrics to monitor progress for two INL-funded law enforcement and judicial assistance projects. INL's Standard Operating Policy/Procedures on Monitoring and Evaluation of Programs requires that monitoring and evaluations processes be built into all program plans.<sup>5</sup> Embassy Paramaribo used metrics as an evaluation tool for these projects. OIG found the Political-Economic Section relied on some outdated metrics first set in 2010 and 2012, respectively. For example, on one of the projects, the embassy in 2018 entered into a \$390,000 agreement with the United Nations Office of Drug Control to support anti-money laundering efforts in Suriname, but did not establish with the host government, nor did INL require, updated metrics to measure the project's progress. Political-Economic Section staff told OIG they lacked training and were unaware of the need to monitor project progress against established metrics. Without current metrics for its projects, the embassy cannot measure project progress and performance against embassy ICS and INL strategic planning objectives.

**Recommendation 1:** Embassy Paramaribo, in coordination with the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, should comply with metrics and monitoring requirements for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement-funded projects in accordance with Department guidance. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo, in coordination with INL)

***Embassy Did Not Comply With Program Evaluation Requirements***

The embassy did not comply with evaluation requirements for six INL projects totaling \$2.2 million from FY 2014 through FY 2018. According to the Letter of Agreement between Embassy Paramaribo and the Government of Suriname, the two entities must conduct joint reviews every 6 months and summarize the results in written reports. However, OIG found the embassy

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<sup>5</sup> INL's *Standard Operating Policy/Procedures for Measurement on Monitoring and Evaluation of Programs* (April 4, 2014) at sections 3.3. and 3.4 states that evaluation processes should be built into all INL-funded projects and that monitoring and reporting on project progress must be done at least quarterly.

did not conduct any of the required joint evaluation meetings with the Surinamese Government for the six projects. Embassy staff told OIG they were unaware of this requirement, but said they met often with their counterparts to further project activities. Joint reviews of progress facilitate efficient and effective use of funding, minimize waste of resources, and help measure progress against the embassy's ICS and INL program objectives.

**Recommendation 2:** Embassy Paramaribo should conduct the required joint evaluation reviews with the Government of Suriname for Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs-funded projects. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo)

### ***End-Use Monitoring Procedures Did Not Meet Bureau Guidance***

Embassy Paramaribo's end-use monitoring<sup>6</sup> procedures did not comply with INL guidance. Specifically, the embassy's 2014 standard operating procedure did not provide detailed written procedures for conducting end-use monitoring, nor did it set up a management structure for these records, as required in the 2017 INL Standard Operating Policy/Procedure for End-Use Monitoring.<sup>7</sup> Without current standard operating procedures, the embassy is at risk of not being able to ensure that all items subject to monitoring are properly issued, recorded, and inspected. Embassy staff told OIG they were unaware of the requirements and therefore did not update the standard operating procedures. After OIG brought this issue to their attention, the section drafted standard procedures for embassy leadership review. As a result, OIG did not make a recommendation to address this issue.

### **Spotlight on Success: Law Enforcement Training Alumni "TED Talks"**

The Political-Economic Section, as part of its INL program, hosted a 2018 seminar on the value of training delivered to the previous year's graduates of the International Law Enforcement Academy. The academy is a U.S. Government-funded center based in El Salvador that provides law enforcement courses to police officers from Latin America. The section asked Surinamese academy alumni to provide feedback on what they had learned and how they had put their new skills to work. Section staff also assisted participants in creating presentations, similar to "TED Talks," to share their feedback. The event was an opportunity for police officers throughout the country to re-connect with classmates, exchange knowledge, and to become re-energized in their roles as reform agents. In addition, it allowed embassy staff to further develop relationships with Surinamese law enforcement officials who share embassy reform goals. INL funding covered the minimal cost of the event. Given the success of the event, the embassy was planning additional seminars for more graduates in the future.

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<sup>6</sup> INL's *Standard Operating Policy/Procedure for End-Use Monitoring* (March 3, 2017) requires certain property purchased with foreign assistance funds be monitored to ensure it is used for its intended purposes. In general, equipment valued at more than \$2,500 or items designated as defense articles or dual-use items are subject to this requirement. End-use monitoring fulfills the requirements of Section 484(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 and Section 40A of the Arms Export Control Act. See 22 U.S.C. § 2991(c) and 22 U.S.C. § 2785.

<sup>7</sup> Sections 6.1.1, 6.1.2, and 6.8.1.2.

## Public Diplomacy

OIG reviewed the Public Diplomacy Section's operations in the areas of strategic planning, reporting, section leadership, resource and knowledge management, federal assistance awards, American Spaces,<sup>8</sup> educational and cultural programs, and media engagement. The section consisted of one Public Affairs Officer, who had extended an extra year beyond the normal 2-year tour, and one experienced full-time LE staff, as well as the two LE staff members shared with the Political-Economic Section, one LE staff member shared with the Front Office, and one Mailroom (International Cooperative Administrative Support Services) staff who provided additional audiovisual support. OIG determined that the section effectively used an appropriate range of outreach, exchange, and online tools to promote an informed public understanding of U.S. policy priorities and American society and culture. In addition, the section was integrally involved in formulating and implementing the embassy's ICS, which includes a primary goal of a public opinion environment that supports U.S. policy initiatives. Overall, OIG found that section operations generally complied with Department standards. In addition, during the inspection, Embassy Paramaribo corrected one deficiency and agreed to correct a second, as described below.

### ***Inconsistent Use of Public Diplomacy Mission Activity Tracker***

The section did not consistently enter its public diplomacy activity reports into the Mission Activity Tracker, which compiles global public diplomacy data, as required by the Department.<sup>9</sup> OIG found that, as of August 2018, Embassy Paramaribo had not made any entries in the tracker since July 2017. The Public Affairs Officer said this occurred because of the low priority the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs placed on internal reporting by smaller embassies. However, without systematic reporting and evaluation, public diplomacy managers cannot assess program effectiveness and incorporate that knowledge into decision making. The Public Affairs Officer agreed with OIG's advice that the embassy normalize its use of the Mission Activity Tracker to report its public diplomacy activity and consider writing cables to inform Washington audiences of programmatic successes. During the inspection, the section reported 30 new activities and increased the number of Tracker entries for 2016-2018 by 143 percent.

### ***Grants Administration Generally Effective Although Some Required Documentation Was Missing***

OIG reviewed all of the Public Diplomacy Section's 11 grants and amendments awarded in FY 2017 and FY 2018, totaling \$78,893, and found they complied with Department guidance.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> American Spaces are Department-operated or -supported public diplomacy facilities that host programs and use digital tools to engage foreign audiences in support of U.S. foreign policy objectives.

<sup>9</sup> Cable 15 STATE 116406, "Announcing Release of the New Public Diplomacy Mission Activity Tracker (MAT 4.0)," October 7, 2015.

<sup>10</sup> One grant reviewed by OIG was subject to the Department's Federal Assistance Policy Directive (issued March 2015, revised January 2016) and the Procedural Guide for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to Non-Federal Entities Not Recognized as Foreign Public Entities (issued December 2015). On May 20, 2017, the Office of the

However, OIG also found occasional instances of missing documentation in the electronic grant folders. After OIG raised this issue, the section added the documentation to the files. OIG determined that competing priorities and a lack of familiarity with the Department's State Assistance Management System Overseas system, which the embassy began using in January 2017, led to this general lack of oversight. OIG advised the embassy on the importance of documenting all actions required by the Federal Assistance Directive, and the embassy agreed to follow Department guidance going forward.

### **Spotlight on Success: Creative Use of Film Festival to Build Understanding and Support for the United States**

Embassy Paramaribo adapted the use of movies, a traditional public diplomacy tool, to inform youth audiences in Suriname on a wide variety of issues, such as religious freedom, civil rights, and women in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics, or STEM, fields, as well as on other aspects of U.S. society and culture. In 2017, the annual embassy-organized film festival reached approximately 8,750 students from 37 middle and high schools, representing almost one quarter (23 percent) of all Surinamese youth aged 12-17. Thirteen movies were shown over 45 viewings, with each movie having an associated lesson plan for teachers to use in the class to amplify the movie's theme. This approach enabled the embassy to reach audiences from 9 of 10 administrative districts in Suriname.

### **Consular Affairs**

OIG reviewed consular operations, including American citizen services, nonimmigrant visas, training and cashiering, management controls, outreach, crisis management, and fraud prevention programs. OIG found that the consular chief, who arrived in August 2018, demonstrated strong leadership in reviewing standard operating procedures and supervising two LE staff and a newly hired eligible family member consular assistant. The Regional Consular Officer also regularly visited the embassy. OIG concluded that the mission carried out its consular responsibilities in compliance with applicable law and Department guidance.

## **RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

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OIG reviewed internal control systems in the general services, facilities management, human resources, and financial management operations at Embassy Paramaribo and identified multiple deficiencies, as detailed below. The Management Section attributed these to staffing gaps, most notably in the Management Officer position for 2 months and the General Services Officer position for 7 months, both of whom arrived shortly before the start of the inspection, and insufficient regional support from the FRC during this period.

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Procurement Executive consolidated these two documents into a Federal Assistance Directive (revised October 1, 2017). The other 10 grants were subject to this revised, consolidated guidance.

## **General Services Operations**

### ***Embassy Did Not Properly Review Purchase Card Program***

OIG found that Embassy Paramaribo's purchase card program did not comply with Department requirements. Specifically, the embassy did not conduct an annual purchase card program review for FY 2017, as required by 4 FAM 455.3a(16). In addition, the embassy did not review cardholder training, internal controls, or compliance with established procedures. Failure to perform required annual reviews of the purchase card program increases the risk of misuse of purchase cards and loss of U.S. Government resources.

**Recommendation 3:** Embassy Paramaribo should comply with Department standards for its purchase card program. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo)

### ***Drivers Exceeded Department's 10-Hour Limit on Working Hours***

Embassy motor pool drivers regularly exceeded Department limits on working hours. OIG reviewed time and attendance records for three drivers over 24 pay periods in 2018 and found they sometimes worked as many as 17 hours per shift. This is inconsistent with the Department's Overseas Motor Vehicle Safety Management Program, 14 FAM 433.8a, and 15 FAM 957.3(4), which limit the daily duty time for drivers of U.S. Government-owned or leased vehicles to 10 hours per day. OIG found that motor pool managers neither planned nor staffed trips to avoid exceeding this limit. Exceeding maximum duty hours increases the risk of driver fatigue and the risk of preventable accidents and motor vehicle mishaps.

**Recommendation 4:** Embassy Paramaribo should comply with the Department's Overseas Motor Vehicle Safety Management Program policy regarding driver working hours. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo)

### ***No Key Controls for Official Vehicles***

Embassy Paramaribo did not have a centralized system for controlling keys for official U.S. Government vehicles. In accordance with 14 FAM 436.3c, the officer responsible for official vehicle use must establish effective management control procedures to ensure vehicles are used only by qualified drivers or other authorized operators. OIG found, however, that the embassy kept keys for official vehicles in both a locked cabinet and an unlocked drawer in the motor pool office. The office door could not be locked at the time of the inspection, allowing anyone to access the office after-hours. The lack of an effective key control system increases the risk of theft or unauthorized use of official vehicles and exposes the embassy to potential liability in the event of an accident or other incident.

**Recommendation 5:** Embassy Paramaribo should manage keys for official vehicles in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo)

### ***Embassy Did Not Track Residential Fuel Deliveries***

Embassy Paramaribo did not have a system to track residential fuel deliveries. Guidance in 14 FAH-1 H-815.2d requires that copies of fuel delivery orders be forwarded to the receiving clerk and kept in a pending file until delivery. Upon delivery, the delivery orders are to be compared with the vendor delivery tickets to ensure that the correct quantity and type of fuel is delivered. OIG found no records showing that a receiving clerk checked the residential deliveries against the orders or tracked consumption. A lack of oversight increases the possibility of fuel theft or inaccurate fuel deliveries.

**Recommendation 6:** Embassy Paramaribo should comply with Department standards for tracking residential fuel deliveries. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo)

### ***No Controls for Warehousing Program***

OIG found that the embassy did not establish controls for its warehousing program. Specifically, OIG found:

- The embassy did not designate warehouse duties in writing, nor did it follow requirements for separation of duties, as required in 14 FAH-1 H-112.2c and j.
- The warehouse did not have a centralized receiving area, as recommended in 14 FAH-1 H-312.1.
- The warehouse contained assets, such as 49 months of expendable supplies and \$196,000 of non-expendable assets, that exceeded their life cycle and should be disposed, in accordance with 14 FAH-1 H-711.
- The General Services Office did not conduct or document spot checks to verify the accuracy of property records and discrepancies, as required in 14 FAH-1 H-112.2f(3).

A lack of recordkeeping and oversight leaves the embassy's property vulnerable to fraud and theft, resulting in the possible loss of U.S. Government funds.

**Recommendation 7:** Embassy Paramaribo should implement controls for handling and storage of property in its warehousing program in accordance with Department guidance. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo)

## **Facilities Management**

### ***Former Chancery Is an Underutilized Property and Should be Sold***

Embassy Paramaribo moved into its new embassy compound in September 2016, after which it identified the old chancery as an underutilized property as required by 15 FAM 512.1a, valued at \$4.5 million. A contract to sell the building failed in February 2018 after the buyer was unable to meet the contract requirements. At the time of the inspection, the embassy had yet to find a new buyer for the property, but staff were actively making efforts to do so. In the meantime, the embassy must continue to pay for guard services, electricity, and phone services for the

vacant building. OIG advised the embassy to continue its efforts and sell the property as soon as possible so that it may reduce operating expenses and potentially put up to \$4.5 million to better use.

### ***Roof Leaks in New Embassy Compound Created Health Hazards***

Leaks in new embassy compound building roofs, including in the chancery and warehouse, caused health hazards, such as exposure to mold, for embassy employees. The leaks were part of a list of warranty items the contractor did not address within the first year of occupancy. The facility manager identified the health hazard in March 2017, as part of a workplace hazard identification and assessment effort required by 15 FAM 962. However, at the time of the inspection, more than 2 years after the problem was first identified, the problem still had not been resolved. OIG determined that the embassy, in particular the Facility Manager, had done everything they could to raise the issue and push for resolution. However, the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO) and the construction contractor had not yet come to an agreement on who was responsible for the repairs. It is unacceptable that OBO has not addressed this problem and that employees are being subjected to health hazards in the workplace. Employees told OIG they were experiencing respiratory issues as a result of the mold present in the chancery. Until the roof leaks are fixed, and mold remediation is completed on the chancery and warehouse, these health hazards will continue to present a risk to staff working inside both the chancery and warehouse.

**Recommendation 8:** The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, in coordination with Embassy Paramaribo, should address the roof leaks in the new embassy compound and mitigate the resulting health hazards within 180 days. (Action: OBO, in coordination with Embassy Paramaribo)

### ***Warehouse Had Multiple Safety Hazards***

OIG found the new embassy compound's warehouse had multiple safety hazards, including inaccessible emergency equipment such as fire extinguishers and eye wash stations and aisles blocked by excess property. Additionally, none of the staff received training to operate a forklift, nor did they wear personal protective equipment when operating such equipment. The Post Occupational Safety and Health Officer conducted inspections as required by 15 FAM 962 and documented the deficiencies. However, the warehouse manager did not address the issues and her supervisor did not hold her accountable. Failure to address safety hazards at the warehouse could lead to serious injury.

**Recommendation 9:** Embassy Paramaribo should eliminate the safety hazards at the new embassy compound warehouse in accordance with Department guidance. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo)



## Human Resources

### ***Florida Regional Center Did Not Provide Consistent Levels of Support***

FRC did not provide consistent guidance and support to Embassy Paramaribo. According to the 2017 annual agreement of regional service goals between the embassy and FRC, the center was responsible for providing human resources and financial management and general services contract support to Embassy Paramaribo. However, OIG found that FRC met only half the service goals outlined in the 2017 agreement and there was no mutually agreed-upon regional service goals for 2018. As a result of FRC's inconsistent support, OIG found several human resources deficiencies during the inspection, including:

- The local compensation plan was not updated per requirements in 3 FAH-2 H-312c(3). As a result, it did not comply with local labor laws and did not include information about the new LE staff health plan.
- Annual performance reviews were not completed in a timely manner as required by guidance in 3 FAH-2 H-135.5 and 3 FAH-1 H-2813.3-6.
- Arrival and departure cables for direct-hire personnel did not meet the timeliness requirements in 3 FAH-1 H-3763.3-3 and 3 FAH-1 H-3763.3-4.

OIG determined that staffing gaps at both FRC and Embassy Paramaribo resulted in the inconsistent guidance and support, as well as the lack of a current annual agreement of regional service goals. Without full support from FRC to assist the embassy in developing management controls and standard operating procedures, the embassy was at risk of being unable to prevent or promptly detect errors and mismanagement.

**Recommendation 10:** Embassy Paramaribo, in coordination with the Florida Regional Center, should implement a new annual agreement of regional service goals. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo, in coordination with FRC)

### ***Embassy Did Not Meet Local Compensation Plan Requirements***

Embassy Paramaribo did not meet requirements set forth in its local compensation plan for LE staff.<sup>11</sup> OIG found the embassy failed to pay within-grade increases to 32 eligible LE staff members from May to November 2018. As a result, an incorrect salary base was used by the embassy to apply mandated bonus payments and retirement contributions for those employees. This occurred because the embassy did not convert to the Department's new Human Resources Overseas Post Personnel System by the February 2018 deadline set by the Bureau of Human Resources.<sup>12</sup> As a result, the embassy lost access to its data in the previous

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<sup>11</sup> A local compensation plan forms the legal basis for all salary, bonus, and other payments to LE staff members under guidelines in 3 FAM 7521.

<sup>12</sup> Cable 17 FRC FT Lauderdale 1392, "WHA Implementation Schedule of the Overseas Personnel System," October 20, 2017.



personnel system and could not process LE staff personnel actions. At the time of the inspection, Embassy Paramaribo was working with the bureau to implement the new system.

The embassy did not formally notify the affected employees of this problem until well after LE staff members noticed discrepancies in their pay. During the inspection, the embassy began collaborating with the Bureau of the Comptroller and Global Financial Services on a manual process to retroactively pay the withheld within-grade increases and explore ways to correct the salary base of the affected employees. In addition to creating morale problems among the LE staff, not paying the within-grade increases and the resulting incorrect retirement contributions and bonuses put the embassy at risk of not complying with local labor law.

**Recommendation 11:** Embassy Paramaribo, in coordination with the Bureau of Human Resources and the Bureau of the Comptroller and Global Financial Services, should calculate locally employed staff benefit entitlements in accordance with the local compensation plan. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo, in coordination with DGHR and CGFS)

***Embassy Paramaribo's Pension Plan for Locally Employed Staff Not Properly Administered***

The embassy did not administer its LE staff pension plan<sup>13</sup> in accordance with Department guidelines. OIG found that the embassy had not made systematic adjustments to employer contribution amounts to ensure sufficient funds were available to pay potential benefits. Department guidance<sup>14</sup> recommends that embassy officials conduct a periodic review of pension plan contribution rates and other factors to ensure it is sufficiently funding. However, Embassy Paramaribo lacked the internal expertise to monitor pension plan providers or perform actuarial evaluations to ensure the pension plan was properly funded. OIG's 2009 inspection recommended a Department audit of the LE staff pension plan after finding there were concerns about its financial viability and determining the embassy did not have funds for an actuarial audit.<sup>15</sup> The audit, completed in 2017, identified a \$2.9 million deficit in the pension plan. The Department allotted \$2.3 million in FY 2017 and an additional \$625,000 in FY 2018 to correct the deficit. However, the embassy did not disburse the funds into the pension plan because of questions about whether the plan provider was going to continue to operate in Suriname. At the time of the inspection, the embassy, with assistance from FRC and Embassy Port-au-Prince, was planning to contract with a new pension plan provider. However, OIG found that the process had stalled, and, in the meantime, the pension plan continued to be underfunded. Failure to fully fund the LE staff pension plan puts the Department at risk of incurring unfunded liabilities and non-compliance with Suriname labor laws.

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<sup>13</sup> Embassy Paramaribo's LE staff pension plan is a defined benefit plan intended to provide a specific amount to employees at their normal retirement age.

<sup>14</sup> Cable 04 STATE 037953, "Evaluating FSN Retirement Programs," February 20, 2004. This is the only Department guidance on evaluating defined benefit pension plans. This cable also discusses the challenges in managing defined benefit pension plans and the advantages to posts of transitioning to a defined contribution plan for LE staff. Defined contribution plans do not require actuarial evaluation and therefore are relatively easy for posts to administer. In addition, there is no unfunded exposure to either the employee or the employer under a defined contribution plan.

<sup>15</sup> OIG, *Inspection of Embassy Paramaribo, Suriname* (ISP-I-09-38A, May 2009).

**Recommendation 12:** Embassy Paramaribo, in coordination with the Bureau of Human Resources, should correct the deficit in the locally employed staff pension plan in accordance with Department guidance. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo, in coordination with DGHR)

## Financial Management

### *Embassy Did Not Conduct Quarterly Financial Reviews*

Embassy Paramaribo did not conduct periodic unannounced reviews of LE staff certifying activity<sup>16</sup> as required by 4 FAH-3 H-065.2-2d. Embassy staff told OIG the lack of the annual agreement of regional service goals with FRC left them unclear as to who was responsible for conducting these reviews. As a result, they were not completed. Because certifying officers must personally reimburse the U.S. Government for any improper payment made by a disbursing officer because of incorrect certifications, the lack of monitoring of the certification activity could result in liability to the designated LE staff members.

**Recommendation 13:** Embassy Paramaribo should conduct unannounced quarterly reviews of locally employed staff certifying activity in accordance with Department guidelines. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo)

## INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

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OIG reviewed classified, unclassified, and dedicated internet network operations; physical protection of information technology assets; classified communications security; emergency communication preparedness; radio and telephone programs; and mail and pouch services. OIG found that the Information Management Section programs and services met the day-to-day computing and communications needs of the embassy. However, OIG identified deficiencies in the implementation of effective information security and information management, as detailed below. Additionally, the companion classified report contains one Information Management Section-related finding.

### *Information Management Operations Lacked Standard Operating Procedures*

Embassy Paramaribo lacked standard operating procedures for the Information Management help desk operation. As a result, the section did not always handle administration of user accounts and help desk support requests in a timely manner. OIG also found the section did not establish basic user account management procedures for incoming and departing personnel. As a result, incoming personnel immediately incurred a delay in the administrative transfer process for their user accounts. Additionally, section staff lacked established procedures for managing information technology (IT) service requests submitted through the Department's myServices system, which resulted in the requests being assigned staff members on an ad hoc

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<sup>16</sup> Because Embassy Paramaribo does not have a U.S. direct-hire Financial Management Officer, payments for embassy expenses often are certified by an LE staff member.

basis and, in some cases, delayed completion. According to 5 FAM 867, section managers must maintain documentation for all aspects of computer support and operations to ensure continuity and consistency. The Information Management Officer, who arrived one month prior to the start of the inspection, acknowledged the need to formally establish and document section procedures. The absence of established standard operating procedures adversely affects the overall management and effectiveness of these operations.

**Recommendation 14:** Embassy Paramaribo should implement standard operating procedures for information management operations. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo)

### ***Information Systems Security Officer Duties Not Performed***

Embassy Paramaribo's Information Systems Security Officers (ISSO) did not perform information system audits or other mandated ISSO duties, including vulnerability scanning, random email reviews, and random user data reviews. According to 12 FAM 623.2, ISSOs must create, protect, and retain information system audit records. Furthermore, as stated in 12 FAM 632.1-8c and 12 FAH-10 H-122.5-2(1), ISSOs must conduct monthly reviews of randomly selected user accounts to ensure users are not processing information above the authorized classification level for the network. OIG issued a Management Assistance Report in May 2017<sup>17</sup> that identified the need to enforce the performance of ISSO duties by overseas personnel in accordance with Department standards. In a subsequent cable,<sup>18</sup> the Department directed embassy management to work with ISSOs to ensure performance of their duties by prioritizing resources to make sure that cybersecurity needs were met and documented. Section managers told OIG that competing priorities prevented the completion of these duties. Not completing the required ISSO duties increases the potential for unauthorized access or malicious activity on the Department's networks.

**Recommendation 15:** Embassy Paramaribo should perform Information Systems Security Officer duties in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo)

### ***Embassy Had Unauthorized Wireless Networks***

Embassy Paramaribo operated two wireless networks in the information systems center that did not meet Department requirements. According to 12 FAH-10 H-152.1a, embassies must meet Bureau of Diplomatic Security's Wireless Local Area Network Security Standard requirements and receive documented approval from the embassy's Counterintelligence Working Group prior to operating a wireless network. OIG found that the two wireless networks had not met the network security standards, nor did they receive working group approval, as required. This occurred because of a lack of oversight by previous section management. Unauthorized wireless networks lack the security controls necessary to protect the Department's networks and prevent the potential compromise of information.

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<sup>17</sup> OIG, *Management Assistance Report: Non-Performance of Information Systems Security Officer Duties by Overseas Personnel* (ISP-17-24, May 2017).

<sup>18</sup> Cable 17 STATE 104970, "Documenting Information Systems Security Officer (ISSO) Duties," October 18, 2017.

**Recommendation 16:** Embassy Paramaribo should comply with Department security standards for wireless local area networks. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo)

***Information Technology Contingency Plans Were Not Tested***

The Information Management Section did not test IT contingency plans for its unclassified and classified computer networks. According to guidance in 5 FAM 851a, every information system must have a documented contingency plan that is tested annually. The Information Management Officer told OIG that competing priorities limited their ability to test the contingency plans. Untested IT contingency plans increase the risk of ineffective responses to, or loss of critical information during, an emergency or crisis event.

**Recommendation 17:** Embassy Paramaribo should conduct annual information technology contingency plan testing of the unclassified and classified networks in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo)

***Embassy Telephone Technician Did Not Receive Training***

The embassy telephone technician was not trained on how to administer and repair the embassy's advanced Internet Protocol-based telephone system. The embassy began using the telephone system for all incoming and outgoing calls following the completion of the new embassy compound in 2016. At that time, the Department had yet to establish training courses for maintaining the system. During the inspection, OIG learned that the Department's Foreign Service Institute had launched its first training courses for technicians maintaining Internet Protocol-based telephone networks. According to 3 FAM 7635.2(1) and (2), overseas embassies should establish criteria for determining if local employees are eligible for training courses and inform them of available training opportunities. Without staff trained in how to administer and repair the telephone network, the embassy is vulnerable to lengthy service disruptions because section staff would have to troubleshoot problems with technicians in other locations. A trained LE telephone technician would give the embassy the necessary knowledge resource to effectively manage its telephone operations.

**Recommendation 18:** Embassy Paramaribo should provide its locally employed telephone technician with Foreign Service Institute training course number YW331, Cisco Unified Communications Manager Administration. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo)

## 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 Paramaribo and the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations. The Department's complete responses can be found in Appendix B. The Department also provided technical comments that were incorporated into this report, as appropriate.

**Recommendation 1:** Embassy Paramaribo, in coordination with the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, should comply with metrics and monitoring requirements for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement-funded projects in accordance with Department guidance. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo, in coordination with INL)

**Management Response:** In its July 11, 2019 response, Embassy Paramaribo concurred with the recommendation.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that the embassy complies with Department guidance on metrics and monitoring requirements for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement-funded projects.

**Recommendation 2:** Embassy Paramaribo should conduct the required joint evaluation reviews with the Government of Suriname for Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs-funded projects. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo)

**Management Response:** In its July 11, 2019 response, Embassy Paramaribo concurred with the recommendation.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation of joint evaluation reviews with the Government of Suriname for Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs-funded projects.

**Recommendation 3:** Embassy Paramaribo should comply with Department standards for its purchase card program. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo)

**Management Response:** In its July 11, 2019 response, Embassy Paramaribo concurred with the recommendation.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that the embassy purchase card program complies with Department standards.

**Recommendation 4:** Embassy Paramaribo should comply with the Department's Overseas Motor Vehicle Safety Management Program policy regarding driver working hours. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo)

**Management Response:** In its July 11, 2019 response, Embassy Paramaribo concurred with the recommendation.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that the embassy complies with the Department's Overseas Motor Vehicle Safety Management Program policy regarding driver working hours.

**Recommendation 5:** Embassy Paramaribo should manage keys for official vehicles in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo)

**Management Response:** In its July 11, 2019 response, Embassy Paramaribo concurred with the recommendation.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that the embassy manages keys for official vehicles in accordance with Department standards.

**Recommendation 6:** Embassy Paramaribo should comply with Department standards for tracking residential fuel deliveries. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo)

**Management Response:** In its July 11, 2019 response, Embassy Paramaribo concurred with the recommendation. The embassy noted an estimated completion date of August 2019.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that the embassy tracks residential fuel deliveries in accordance with Department standards.

**Recommendation 7:** Embassy Paramaribo should implement controls for handling and storage of property in its warehousing program in accordance with Department guidance. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo)

**Management Response:** In its July 11, 2019 response, Embassy Paramaribo concurred with the recommendation. The embassy noted an estimated completion date of September 2019.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that the embassy implemented controls for handling and storage of property in the warehouse program that complies with Department guidance.

**Recommendation 8:** The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, in coordination with Embassy Paramaribo, should address the roof leaks in the new embassy compound and mitigate the resulting health hazards within 180 days. (Action: OBO, in coordination with Embassy Paramaribo)

**Management Response:** In its July 11, 2019 response, the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations concurred with the recommendation.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that the bureau addressed the roof leaks in the new embassy compound and mitigated the resulting health hazards.

**Recommendation 9:** Embassy Paramaribo should eliminate the safety hazards at the new embassy compound warehouse in accordance with Department guidance. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo)

**Management Response:** In its July 11, 2019 response, Embassy Paramaribo concurred with the recommendation.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that the embassy eliminated safety hazards at the new embassy compound.

**Recommendation 10:** Embassy Paramaribo, in coordination with the Florida Regional Center, should implement a new annual agreement of regional service goals. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo, in coordination with FRC)

**Management Response:** In its July 11, 2019 response, Embassy Paramaribo concurred with the recommendation. The embassy noted it signed a new annual agreement with the Florida Regional Center in April 2019.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation of the updated annual agreement with the Florida Regional Center.

**Recommendation 11:** Embassy Paramaribo, in coordination with the Bureau of Human Resources and the Bureau of the Comptroller and Global Financial Services, should calculate locally employed staff benefit entitlements in accordance with the local compensation plan. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo, in coordination with DGHR and CGFS)

**Management Response:** In its July 11, 2019 response, Embassy Paramaribo disagreed with the recommendation. The embassy noted that it agreed the locally employed staff should be paid as entitled, but it did not feel action to comply with this recommendation should be primarily with the embassy. The embassy noted that the Department's Overseas Personnel System did not fully support the embassy's local compensation plan requirements. The system allows the



embassy to process within-grade increases and other personnel actions, but it still must manually correct vacation bonuses when necessary.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. Although the embassy did not concur with the embassy being the action office on this recommendation, it is now able to use the Overseas Personnel System, with manual adjustments to calculate entitlements in accordance with the local compensation program. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that locally employed staff benefit entitlements are calculated in accordance with the local compensation plan.

**Recommendation 12:** Embassy Paramaribo, in coordination with the Bureau of Human Resources, should correct the deficit in the locally employed staff pension plan in accordance with Department guidance. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo, in coordination with DGHR)

**Management Response:** In its July 11, 2019 response, Embassy Paramaribo concurred with the recommendation. The embassy noted an estimated completion date of December 2019.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that the deficit in the locally employed staff pension plan was corrected.

**Recommendation 13:** Embassy Paramaribo should conduct unannounced quarterly reviews of locally employed staff certifying activity in accordance with Department guidelines. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo)

**Management Response:** In its July 11, 2019 response, Embassy Paramaribo concurred with the recommendation.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation of quarterly reviews of the locally employed staff certifying activity.

**Recommendation 14:** Embassy Paramaribo should implement standard operating procedures for information management operations. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo)

**Management Response:** In its July 11, 2019 response, Embassy Paramaribo concurred with the recommendation. The embassy noted an estimated completion date of September 2019.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation of standard operating procedures for information management operations.

**Recommendation 15:** Embassy Paramaribo should perform Information Systems Security Officer duties in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo)



**Management Response:** In its July 11, 2019 response, Embassy Paramaribo concurred with the recommendation. The embassy noted an estimated completion date of August 2019.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that Information Systems Security Officer duties are performed in accordance with Department standards.

**Recommendation 16:** Embassy Paramaribo should comply with Department security standards for wireless local area networks. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo)

**Management Response:** In its July 11, 2019 response, Embassy Paramaribo concurred with the recommendation.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that the embassy complies with the Department security standards for wireless local area networks.

**Recommendation 17:** Embassy Paramaribo should conduct annual information technology contingency plan testing of the unclassified and classified networks in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo)

**Management Response:** In its July 11, 2019 response, Embassy Paramaribo concurred with the recommendation.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation of annual information technology contingency plan testing of the embassy's unclassified and classified networks.

**Recommendation 18:** Embassy Paramaribo should provide its locally employed telephone technician with Foreign Service Institute training course number YW331, Cisco Unified Communications Manager Administration. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo)

**Management Response:** In its July 11, 2019 response, Embassy Paramaribo concurred with the recommendation. The embassy noted an estimated completion date of December 2019.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that the locally employed telephone technician received the required Cisco Unified Communications Manager Administration training.

## PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS

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<b>Title</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Arrival Date</b>
<b>Chiefs of Mission:</b>		
Chargé d'Affaires	Graham Webster	8/2016
<b>Chiefs of Sections:</b>		
Management	Michelle Mason	9/2018
Consular	Robert Pastore	7/2018
Political-Economic	Joseph Relk	6/2018
Public Diplomacy	Patrick Geraghty	6/2016
Regional Security	Steven Johnston	7/2017
<b>Other Agencies:</b>		
Department of Defense	Everette (Travis) Ervin, CMDR USN	12/2017

**Source:** Embassy Paramaribo

## APPENDIX A: OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

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This inspection was conducted from September 4, 2018, to April 5, 2019,<sup>1</sup> 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 U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM).

### Objectives and Scope

The Office of Inspections provides the Secretary of State, the Chief Executive Officer of USAGM, and Congress with systematic and independent evaluations of the operations of the Department and USAGM. 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 and U.S. interests are 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; and whether instances 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; circulates surveys and compiles the results, as appropriate; conducts interviews with Department and on-site personnel; observes daily operations; and reviews the substance of the report and its findings and recommendations with offices, individuals, and organizations affected by the review. OIG uses professional judgment, along with physical, documentary, testimonial, and analytical evidence collected or generated, to develop findings, conclusions, and actionable recommendations. For this inspection, OIG conducted 93 interviews and reviewed responses to 154 personal questionnaires.

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<sup>1</sup> This work was delayed because of the lapse in OIG's appropriations that occurred from 11:59 p.m. December 21, 2018, through January 25, 2019.

## APPENDIX B: MANAGEMENT RESPONSES

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July 11, 2019

UNCLASSIFIED

TO: OIG – Sandra Lewis, Assistant Inspector General for Inspections

CC: WHA/EX; WHA/CAR, INL, DGHR, CGFS, OBO

FROM: Embassy Paramaribo – Ambassador Karen L. Williams

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

Embassy Paramaribo has reviewed the draft OIG inspection report. We provide the following comments in response to the draft recommendations provided by the OIG:

**OIG Recommendation 1:** Embassy Paramaribo, in coordination with the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, should comply with metrics and monitoring requirements for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement-funded projects in accordance with Department guidance. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo, in coordination with INL)

**Embassy Paramaribo Response:** Embassy Paramaribo concurs with the recommendation. In 2017, INL/WHP signed a contract with Dexis Consulting Group to develop a monitoring and evaluation system for INL programs, including the hiring of M&E Specialist through Dexis in November 2018, who currently oversees the development and collection of strategic performance measures for INL Paramaribo.

**OIG Recommendation 2:** Embassy Paramaribo should conduct the required joint evaluation reviews with the Government of Suriname for Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs-funded projects. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo)

**Embassy Paramaribo Response:** Embassy Paramaribo concurs with the recommendation. Of the six projects totaling \$2.235 million described in the report, INL has ongoing projects valued at \$606,695. Post has met four times in the past ten months with Government of Suriname officials in relation to these funds but has not held a formal joint evaluation review. Post will coordinate with INL to hold joint evaluation reviews biannually with the Government of Suriname and/or the DC-based international organization that is the sole recipient of the funds.

**OIG Recommendation 3:** Embassy Paramaribo should comply with Department standards for its purchase card program. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo)

**Embassy Paramaribo Response:** Embassy Paramaribo concurs with the recommendation. Post completed the FY18 Annual Review in December 2018, verified that all training is up-to-date and all designated roles in the purchase card system are appropriate.

**OIG Recommendation 4:** Embassy Paramaribo should comply with the Department's Overseas Motor Vehicle Safety Management Program policy regarding driver working hours. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo)

**Embassy Paramaribo Response:** Embassy Paramaribo concurs with the recommendation. Post implemented the recommendation in February 2019 by creating a motor pool calendar to schedule drivers in advance, creating a 2<sup>nd</sup> shift to come in late to avoid the 10 hour rule, and rotating weekend duty for COM drivers to avoid going over the 10 hour limit.

**OIG Recommendation 5:** Embassy Paramaribo should manage keys for official vehicles in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo)

**Embassy Paramaribo Response:** Embassy Paramaribo concurs with the recommendation. Post implemented the recommendation in June 2019 with the SOEs fixing the motor pool door so it is now accessible only through Hersh security key pad combination and all keys are kept in a lock box behind the secure door.

**OIG Recommendation 6:** Embassy Paramaribo should comply with Department standards for tracking residential fuel deliveries. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo)

**Embassy Paramaribo Response:** Embassy Paramaribo concurs with the recommendation. Post is developing an SOP for fuel deliveries. The expected completion date is August 2019.

**OIG Recommendation 7:** Embassy Paramaribo should implement controls for handling and storage of property in its warehousing program in accordance with Department guidance. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo)

**Embassy Paramaribo Response:** Embassy Paramaribo concurs with the recommendation. Position descriptions are being amended to designate warehouse duties and separation of duties. The expected completion date is September 2019. The receiving area is designated but currently used for FAC storage. FAC cleaning out receiving area. The expected completion date August 2019. Expendables being reduced. The expected completion date is August 2019. GSO and MO spot check all items for auction and GSO conducts random spot checks. Three auctions have been held since the OIG inspection to clear excess property.

**OIG Recommendation 8:** The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, in coordination with Embassy Paramaribo, should address the roof leaks in the new embassy compound and mitigate

the resulting health hazards within 180 days. (Action: OBO, in coordination with Embassy Paramaribo)

**Embassy Paramaribo Response:** Embassy Paramaribo concurs with the recommendation. Post Facilities Manager is coordinating with OBO on its action.

**OIG Recommendation 9:** Embassy Paramaribo should eliminate the safety hazards at the New Embassy Compound warehouse in accordance with Department guidance. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo)

**Embassy Paramaribo Response:** Embassy Paramaribo concurs with the recommendation. Post has completed several auctions which cleared the eyewash station and fire extinguishers so they are accessible and aisles are no longer blocked by excess property. Forklift training was completed in April 2019. In January 2019, all POSHO identified safety hazards were addressed and corrected.

**OIG Recommendation 10:** Embassy Paramaribo, in coordination with the Florida Regional Center, should implement a new annual agreement of regional service goals. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo, in coordination with FRC)

**Embassy Paramaribo Response:** Embassy Paramaribo concurs with the recommendation. The embassy and FRC signed a new agreement in April 2019.

**OIG Recommendation 11:** Embassy Paramaribo, in coordination with the Bureau of Human Resources and the Bureau of the Comptroller and Global Financial Services, should calculate locally employed staff benefit entitlements in accordance with the local compensation plan. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo, in coordination with DGHR and CGFS)

**Embassy Paramaribo Response:** Embassy Paramaribo does not concur with action as Embassy Paramaribo – we absolutely agree that staff should be paid as entitled, but neither the issue nor the solution is/was primarily Post’s action. In fact, the Overseas Personnel System (OPS) system still does not fully support Post’s local compensation plan requirements. Post can now use OPS to process within-grade-increases and other personnel actions but still must manually correct the vacation bonus when necessary. We have included full details in the separate document on inaccuracies/edits in the draft Inspection Report.

**OIG Recommendation 12:** Embassy Paramaribo, in coordination with the Bureau of Human Resources, should correct the deficit in the locally employed staff pension plan in accordance with Department guidance. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo, in coordination with DGHR)

**Embassy Paramaribo Response:** Embassy Paramaribo concurs with the recommendation. Post received authorization from HR/OE in June 2019 to develop a Statement of Work to

advertise for a new pension provider. The SOW was sent to HR/OE for review. The expected completion date for new pension provider and transfer of all funds is December 2019.

**OIG Recommendation 13:** Embassy Paramaribo should conduct unannounced quarterly reviews of locally employed staff certifying activity in accordance with Department guidelines. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo)

**Embassy Paramaribo Response:** Embassy Paramaribo concurs with the recommendation. Post now conducts reviews in accordance with department guidelines. Reviews were held in November, February, and April.

**OIG Recommendation 14:** Embassy Paramaribo should implement standard operating procedures for information management operations. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo)

**Embassy Paramaribo Response:** Embassy Paramaribo concurs with the recommendation. Post is developing an SOP for IRM operations. The expected completion date is September 2019.

**OIG Recommendation 15:** Embassy Paramaribo should perform Information Systems Security Officer duties in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo)

**Embassy Paramaribo Response:** Embassy Paramaribo concurs with the recommendation. Post is establishing set hours for ISSO duties in accordance with Department standards. The expected implementation date is August 2019.

**OIG Recommendation 16:** Embassy Paramaribo should comply with Department security standards for wireless local area networks. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo)

**Embassy Paramaribo Response:** Embassy Paramaribo concurs with the recommendation. Post submitted the required documents and questionnaire to IRM WIFI Governance Board in April 2019. The embassy is awaiting further guidance from the governance board.

**OIG Recommendation 17:** Embassy Paramaribo should conduct annual information technology contingency plan testing of the unclassified and classified networks in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo)

**Embassy Paramaribo Response:** Embassy Paramaribo concurs with the recommendation. Post updated the contingency plan in PEGASYS in April 2019. Testing is set for August 2019.

**OIG Recommendation 18:** Embassy Paramaribo should provide its locally employed telephone technician with Foreign Service Institute training course number YW331, Cisco Unified Communications Manager Administration. (Action: Embassy Paramaribo)

**Embassy Paramaribo Response:** Embassy Paramaribo concurs with the recommendation. Post has requested Post training from FRC on the system to train more than one person and are coordinating dates. The expected completion date is December 2019. The Incoming IMS will have training prior to arrival at Post.

The point of contact for this memorandum is Management Officer Michelle Mason and, after his August 15 arrival at post, Deputy Chief of Mission Michael C. Keays.





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

UNCLASSIFIED

## MEMORANDUM

TO: OIG/ISP - Sandra Lewis

FROM: OBO/RM - Jeffrey C. Reba, Acting

SUBJECT: Response to Draft OIG Report – Inspection of Embassy Paramaribo, Suriname

OBO has reviewed the subject draft report and below is the response.

**OIG Recommendation 9:** The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, in coordination with Embassy Paramaribo, should address the roof leaks in the new embassy compound and mitigate the resulting health hazards within 180 days. (Action: OBO, in coordination with Embassy Paramaribo)

**OBO Comment:** OBO concurs with the recommendation. The general contractor for the Embassy Paramaribo NEC has accepted responsibility to repair the roof leaks as part of the warranty. The contractor has tentatively scheduled to start the repair of the chancery roof leak between August and November 2019. The project is estimated to be completed within eight weeks. Due to the exterior polycarbonate cladding of the warehouse which poses engineering and architectural challenges, it will take longer to repair the building's roof. OBO and the contractor are currently discussing the best options for the repair.

Post has notified OBO that it has mitigated the mold issue by repairing the fresh air intake which reduced humidity in the buildings. In addition, post has cleaned up all the mold in the Post Communication Center and Controlled Access Area offices.

The point of contact for this memo is Amy Gertsch.

## ABBREVIATIONS

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DCM	Deputy Chief of Mission
FAH	Foreign Affairs Handbook
FAM	Foreign Affairs Manual
FRC	Florida Regional Center
ICS	Integrated Country Strategy
INL	Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs
ISSO	Information Systems Security Officer
LE	Locally Employed

## OIG INSPECTION TEAM MEMBERS

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