



U.S. Embassy Quito, Ecuador

MONTHLY UPDATE



April 2019

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE

In response to the March 2018 report, *Inspection of the Yemen Affairs Unit*, the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs provided documentation that its lease for the Diplomatic Transit Facility Sana'a was terminated and three support positions were eliminated. This resulted in \$14.6 million in funds put to better use over a 2-year period.

In response to a recommendation in *Evaluation of the Department of State's FOIA Processes for Requests Involving the Office of the Secretary*, the Bureau of Administration created and hired personnel for 8 new positions to handle FOIA and is in the process of hiring 11 more. The Department also implemented an agency-wide initiative, known as the FOIA Surge, which decreased the Department's FOIA backlog by 40 percent.

OIG's August 2018 report *Management Assistance Report: Use of Confidentiality Agreements by a Department of State Contractor* recommended the Department order one of its contractors, MSA Security, to modify or discontinue use of a confidentiality agreement that violates federal law. After action by the Office of Acquisitions Management, MSA Security modified the agreements to include an exception for reporting fraud, waste, or abuse to a designated investigative or law enforcement representative and provided documentation to the Department that it has notified all employees of the change.

In March 2019, a former information technology contractor for OIG pleaded guilty to theft and embezzlement of up to 16 government computers from OIG. OIG special agents determined that, from approximately July 2016 through February 2017, the employee sold the stolen computers on various Internet websites. Sentencing is pending.

## RECOMMENDATIONS STATUS

as of March 29, 2019

1,023

Open  
Recommendations

62

Recommendations  
Closed During March

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In March 2019, the Department issued a letter of reprimand to a management counselor for failure to notify the Department's property survey board of suspected theft of U.S. Embassy property. OIG special agents determined that the employee's careless performance of duties as the property management officer contributed to the overall lack of accountability at post.

In March 2019, the Department debarred a former Department program manager and the former owner of a transportation company for 3 years each. Both individuals were previously convicted in U.S. District Court for conspiracy to commit theft of Government funds and honest services wire fraud.

As a result of OIG's August 2017 report *Management Assistance Report: The Process to Authorize and Track Information Technology Systems Needs Improvement*, the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, in coordination with the Bureau of Information Resource Management, completed the Systems Authorization Process. This action will help ensure that the Department safeguards the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of its information technology systems.

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE (continued)

The Aviation Governing Board (AGB) and the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL) took actions to address issues identified in the September 2018 report *Audit of the Department of State's Administration of its Aviation Program*. AGB updated its charter and INL funded a system upgrade to accommodate the recording of all aviation property. INL also adopted a best practice in contract oversight, using an online performance management tool that is now mandatory for all INL country-specific aviation programs.

## SPOTLIGHT ON SUCCESS

### Embassy Response to Ebola Threat Was Quick and Comprehensive

*(Inspection of Embassy Kigali, Rwanda, ISP-I-19-15)*

Embassy Kigali responded quickly and comprehensively to the August 1, 2018, notification of an Ebola outbreak in bordering eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. The next day, the Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM), acting as Chargé, met with a CDC and USAID team to assess the situation, and the Consular Section sent a health alert to U.S. citizens enrolled in the consular alert system. The DCM then launched twice weekly Ebola meetings with the core interagency team composed of staff from CDC, USAID, and various embassy sections. The embassy began sending cable updates to the Department and participating in a weekly interagency call with the National Security Council; it also kept staff advised of significant developments.

## NEW WORK STARTED

- Audit of the Special Needs Education Allowance
- Inspection of Canberra, Australia and constituent posts
- Inspection of Pretoria, South Africa and constituent posts
- Inspection of Maseru, Lesotho
- Inspection of Mbabane, Eswatini
- Inspection of Nouakchott, Mauritania
- Inspection of N'Djamena, Chad
- Inspection of the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs
- Inspection of the Kentucky Consular Center

## REPORTS ISSUED

- *Audit of the Department of State Purchase Card Program (AUD-CGI-19-24)*
- *Management Letter Related to the Audit of the United States Agency for Global Media 2018 Financial Statements (AUD-FM-IB-19-17)*
- *Audit of Humanitarian Assistance Cooperative Agreements Supporting Internally Displaced Persons in Iraq (AUD-MERO-19-20)*
- *Inspection of Embassy Kigali, Rwanda (ISP-I-19-15)*



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