MAKING A DIFFERENCE

In response to recommendations in a 2020 report, Audit of Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations Process To Identify and Apply Best Practices and Lessons Learned to Future Construction Projects (AUD-MERO-20-39), the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO), continues to take action. OBO is expanding and creating a more agile Lessons Learned program to capture, analyze, and disseminate broader best practices and lessons learned in constructing embassies throughout the bureau. This helps to address factors such as strengthening collaboration among stakeholders, facilitating building maintenance, and improving program and construction management. Taking advantage of these opportunities could improve OBO operations and help achieve its stated goal of completing construction projects on time and within budget.

In response to a recommendation from a 2019 report, Inspection of Embassy Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic (ISP-I-19-17), Embassy Santo Domingo provided documentation that it cleared overdue travel advances by recouping funds from employees, resulting in $53,715 being put to better use.

In February 2021, former Department grant recipient Oyetayo Fagbenro was sentenced to 366 days of confinement, 730 days of supervised release, and ordered to pay $775,000 restitution. In December 2020, he had pled guilty to misappropriating $775,000 in Department grant funds for his own purposes. OIG special agents determined Fagbenro falsely certified that he had complied with the terms and conditions of three grants that were to be used to build media operations centers in Afghanistan. Instead, he sent much of the money to friends, relatives, and entities unrelated to the grants.

NEW WORK STARTED

- Research for Proposed Office of Inspector General Audit of Internal Controls Over Management Processes at U.S. Embassy Cairo, Egypt
- Audit of Department of State’s Use of Not Otherwise Classified Budget Object Codes
- Research for Proposed Office of Inspector General Audit of Cooperative Agreements and Grants Related to Iran
- Audit of Department of State Management and Monitoring of Federal Assistance Awards to For-Profit Organizations

RECOMMENDATIONS STATUS

as of February 28, 2021

577* Open Recommendations
29 Recommendations Closed During December

*Classified recommendations are not included in these totals because of delays in preparing classified materials due to OIG’s effort to maximize telework and social distancing during the COVID-19 pandemic.

REPORTS ISSUED

- Management Assistance Report: Deficiencies in Consular Physical Space at Overseas Missions (ISP-21-08)