



U.S. Embassy Tashkent, Uzbekistan

March 2021

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

In March 2021, Diane Sturgis, a former U.S. Agency for Global Media Contracting Officer, was sentenced to 2 years in prison and ordered to pay \$45,000 in restitution and a \$10,000 fine for engaging in a bribery and procurement fraud scheme.

Previously, in July 2020, Sturgis pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit bribery and honest services wire fraud. OIG and FBI special agents determined that Sturgis and an owner of a Virginia information and data management firm used a legitimate task order to hire her relative to fill a position in exchange for preferential treatment and the performance of official acts benefitting the firm. From December 2014 through June 2015, the firm issued four payments totaling \$30,000 to the former Contracting Officer’s relative; however, no consulting work was performed in exchange for the payments.

In March 2021, two Foreign Service Officers agreed to pay more than \$13,033 to the U.S. Government to resolve issues related to fraud allegations regarding Department travel vouchers. OIG special agents determined that the married couple engaged in a scheme to defraud the Department by filing four travel vouchers that claimed lodging expenses they were not entitled to under Federal Travel Regulations. The fraud was committed from approximately September 2014 through April 2019. OIG’s Office of General Counsel coordinated the Program Fraud Civil Remedies Act action that resulted in the settlement.

SPOTLIGHTS ON SUCCESS

The Office of Commissary and Recreation Affairs Instituted Advanced Training and Mentoring for New Employee Association Managers (*Inspection of the Bureau of Administration’s Office of Commissary and Recreation Affairs, ISP-I-21-16*)

The Office of Commissary and Recreation Affairs (CR) instituted annual training and mentoring for new employee association managers. Up to 24 new association managers joined up to 12 experienced managers in the course in 2018. The 4-day lesson plan consisted of mini-lectures, hands-on exercises, small group discussion, and small group presentations. This CR initiative promoted professional development and morale and fostered lasting “on the job” mentoring connections through shared contacts and social media platforms. The course offered new association managers helpful guidance to succeed and provided experienced

RECOMMENDATIONS STATUS

as of March 31, 2021

592* Open Recommendations	43 Recommendations Closed During March
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*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.

association managers with the opportunity to mentor new colleagues and facilitate training programs. The program format further strengthened employee association operations. Course participants identified continuing contacts as having a lasting impact and influence in their roles as successful association managers.

NEW WORK STARTED

- *Audit of Department of State Management and Monitoring of Federal Assistance Awards to For-Profit Organizations*
- *Audit of Department of State Use of the "Not Otherwise Classified" Budget Object Codes*
- *Audit of the Department of State FY 2021 Financial Statements*
- *Audit of the Department of State FY 2021 Information Security Program for Sensitive Compartmented Information Systems.*

REPORTS ISSUED

- *Management Assistance Report: Remote Missions Face Challenges Maintaining Communications With Locally Employed Staff and Host Government Officials ([AUD-MERO-21-16](#))*
- *Audit of the Department of State’s Risk Assessments and Monitoring of Voluntary Contributions to Public International Organizations ([AUD-MERO-21-18](#))*

- *Management Letter Related to the Audit of the U.S. Department of State 2020 Financial Statements (AUD-FM-21-19)*
- *Information Report: Review of Department of State Preparations to Return Personnel to Federal Offices During the Coronavirus Pandemic (AUD-MERO-21-22)*
- *Independent Review of the U.S. Department of State Accounting of FY 2020 Drug Control Funds and Related Performance Report (AUD-FM-21-23)*
- *(SBU) Audit of the International Boundary and Water Commission, United States and Mexico, U.S. Section, FY 2020 Information Security Program (AUD-IT-21-20)*
- *(SBU) Audit of the U.S. Agency for Global Media FY 2020 Information Security Program (AUD-IT-IB-21-21)*
- *(TS//NOFORN) Audit of the FY 2020 Information Security Program for Sensitive Compartmented Information Systems at the Department of State (AUD-IT-21-26)*
- *Inspection of the Bureau of Administration's Office of Commissary and Recreation Affairs (ISP-I-21-16)*



The Office of Inspector General conducts independent oversight of the Department of State and the U.S. Agency for Global Media on behalf of American taxpayers to:

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- Prevent and detect fraud, waste, and abuse.
- Identify vulnerabilities and recommend constructive solutions.

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