In response to the 2018 report Audit of Food Safety Controls Under Baghdad Life Support Services Task Order SAQMMA14F0721, the Office of Acquisitions Management verified that the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs’ quality assurance surveillance plan for the food services task order complies with Federal Acquisition Regulation 46.4, “Government Contract Quality Assurance.” This plan helps the Department conduct oversight to hold the contractor accountable for complying with food safety controls and contract requirements.

SPOTLIGHT ON SUCCESS

Improved Evaluation of Treaty Trader Visa Applicants (Inspection of the Bureau of Consular Affairs, Kentucky Consular Center, ISP-I-19-36)

In recent years, the Kentucky Consular Center (KCC) successfully implemented nearly a dozen new programs—built on its expertise and access to analytical tools—that gave consular officers abroad well-developed data to assist in visa adjudication, particularly in identifying non-bona fide travelers. At the time of OIG’s inspection, the KCC’s Pre-Adjudication Support Service Unit was piloting a program to streamline and improve visa adjudication for treaty traders and investors. This visa type, also
known as the E visa, is the most time-consuming and complex visa category on a per applicant basis. Evaluation of the visas requires specialized expertise in business and finance matters, including an understanding of relevant regulations. Under the pilot program, KCC’s trained experts verify the complex documentary requirements for E visas before cases are transmitted to consular sections. KCC’s scrutiny and analysis, in turn, allows adjudicators to focus on an applicant’s qualifications for the visa. KCC’s ability to identify needs and develop programs that give overseas visa adjudicators more complete and well-researched cases is a significant asset to the Department’s enhanced vetting of visa applicants.

NEW WORK STARTED

- Review of Delays Encountered in Constructing the New Embassy Compound in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan
- Audit of the International Boundary and Water Commission, United States and Mexico, U.S. Section, FY 2019 Financial Statements
- Follow-up Audit of Department of State Efforts To Measure, Evaluate, and Sustain Antiterrorism Assistance Program Objectives in the Bureau of East Asian and Public Affairs
- Audit of the Approach Used To Adjust the Size and Composition of Missions Afghanistan and Iraq

REPORTS ISSUED

- Inspection of Embassy Nassau, The Bahamas (ISP-I-19-19)
- Review of the Effects of the Department of State Hiring Freeze (ISP-I-19-23)
- Inspection of Embassy Tirana, Albania (ISP-I-19-26)
- Classified Inspection of Embassy Tirana, Albania (ISP-S-19-26)*
- Classified Inspection of Embassy Ljubljana, Slovenia (ISP-S-19-25)*
- Inspection of the Bureau of Consular Affairs, Kentucky Consular Center (ISP-I-19-36)
- Classified Inspection of the Bureau of Consular Affairs, Kentucky Consular Center (ISP-S-19-36)*
- Management Assistance Report: Outstanding Construction Deliverables and Deficiencies Need Attention at New Embassy Compound The Hague, the Netherlands (AUD-CGI-19-38)

*Report is classified or Sensitive But Unclassified.