



U.S. Embassy Warsaw, Poland

September 2019

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

In August 2019, a former State Department official pleaded guilty to disclosing confidential bid proposal information in an effort to help a furniture company executive win a lucrative contract. In June, the furniture company executive pleaded guilty to obtaining such bid proposals to win the contract to furnish a new U.S. embassy being constructed overseas. OIG special agents determined he had knowingly obtained bid prices and design plans of at least three competitors from two Department employees to achieve a competitive advantage. The information provided by the Department employees enabled the executive and his company to win the contract with a bid of approximately \$1.56 million. Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Russell L. Carlberg and attorneys from DOJ’s Public Integrity Section prosecuted the case.

In August 2019, a former Foreign Service Officer was sentenced to 40 years in federal prison, followed by lifetime supervised release, for sexually abusing minors to produce child pornography and transporting those images to the United States. OIG and Homeland Security Investigations special agents, working with several law enforcement partners, determined the Department employee used an online file-sharing network from October 2014 to March 2018 to distribute child pornography. He also participated in online chats where he provided tips to others about how to meet and abuse minors in the Philippines.

In response to the April 2017 report *Management Assistance Report: Cost of Information Management Staff at Embassies Should Be Distributed to Users of Their Services*, the Department reported that all 52 posts cited in OIG’s report are in compliance with the Foreign Affairs Handbook policy regarding the distribution of costs for information management staff. This has resulted in \$3.9 million in annual funds being put to better use.

RECOMMENDATIONS STATUS

as of August 30, 2019

1,128

Open Recommendations

87

Recommendations Closed During August

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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](#))
- *Lead Inspector General for Operation Inherent Resolve | Quarterly Report to the United States Congress* ([April 1, 2019 - June 30, 2019](#))
- *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](#))*
- *Lead Inspector General for Operation Pacific Eagle-Philippines | Quarterly Report to the United States Congress* ([April 1, 2019 - June 30, 2019](#))
- *Review of Allegations of Politicized and Other Improper Personnel Practices in the Bureau of International Organization Affairs* ([ESP-19-05](#))
- *Lead Inspector General for Operation Freedom's Sentinel | Quarterly Report to the United States Congress* ([April 1, 2019 - June 30, 2019](#))
- *Lead Inspector General for Classified Overseas Contingency Operations in Africa and the Middle East | Quarterly Report to the United States Congress* ([April 1, 2019 - June 30, 2019](#))*
- *Audit of the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations Commissioning of Diplomatic Housing at U.S. Embassy Kabul, Afghanistan* ([AUD-MERO-19-37](#))
- *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.



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