



U.S. Embassy Chisinau, Moldova

July 2023

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

OIG issued a report in July that outlined ways to improve the management of a program that is vital to the issuance of passports and the protection of U.S. citizens abroad. *Audit of the Management and Administration of the Consular Systems Modernization Program* ([AUD-CGI-23-20](#)) showed deficiencies in operating systems that has OIG questioning over \$14 million in unsupported costs. Emerging problems, delays, or other issues of interest are more likely to go undetected without timely receipt and review of all contractor reports. Furthermore, due to inadequately assessed contractor performance, unearned performance awards may have been provided. OIG has provided 20 recommendations for the Department to consider to resolve many of these issues.

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In July 2023, two individuals pled guilty to conspiring to steal U.S. government property and agreed to forfeit a combined \$125,425. OIG, Defense Criminal Investigative Service, and Department of the Army Criminal Investigation Division special agents determined the two subjects conspired to steal property, including night vision devices, at a U.S. military installation, and sell them to prohibited international buyers. Sentencing hearings for the subjects are scheduled for October 2023.

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A former Department of Defense contractor was sentenced in July to 45 months in federal prison, ordered to pay \$27,315 restitution and \$1,400 special assessment, and will serve 3 years supervised release. In March 2023, the contractor was [convicted](#) of 12 counts of wire fraud, two counts of false claims, and making and using a false document in connection with his companies' performance on federal contracts. The conviction follows the subject's

RECOMMENDATIONS STATUS

as of July 31, 2023

1,055*

Open
Recommendations

24**

Recommendations
Closed During July

[View Recommendations](#)

*Includes 46 recommendations associated with the U.S. International Boundary and Water Commission.

**Includes 8 recommendations closed on OIG's classified network.

[Reports](#)

[Ongoing Work](#)

previous July 2020 indictment and arrest. OIG, Department of Labor, and Naval Criminal Investigative Service special agents determined the subject used his companies to defraud multiple federal agencies.

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A former embassy budget analyst was proposed for debarment in July after being [sentenced in 2021](#) to more than a year in federal prison and ordered to pay restitution in the amount of \$156,950. Previously, the subject pled guilty to one count of wire fraud in South Carolina District Court in Charleston, SC. Army Criminal Investigative Division, Defense Criminal Investigative Service, and OIG special agents determined that, from 2015 through 2018, the former budget analyst at the U.S. embassy in Haiti forged the names of U.S Southern Command military commanders on vouchers he created to obtain cash from the U.S. embassy as a trusted employee. In July 2019, the U.S. embassy terminated the employment of four locally employed staff members and counseled one for their roles in the fraud scheme.

SPOTLIGHTS ON SUCCESS

Locally Employed Staff Association's Inclusive Approach Strengthens Relations (*Inspection of Embassy Cotonou, Benin*, [ISP-I-23-20](#))

The Embassy Cotonou Locally Employed Staff Association implemented a bottom-up commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. The association actively sponsors popular community events throughout the year. The association also elects an administrative council of 33 delegates, paying particular attention to full section and agency representation and gender balance.

Secure Smartphone Application Enhances Oversight (*Review of Ukraine Foreign Assistance and Coordination Oversight*, [ISP-I-23-18](#))

The Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO) employed a commercially available smartphone application to remotely and securely document the delivery of equipment and training. The application provides evidence that assistance is reaching intended recipients, even in locales too dangerous or difficult for program implementer staff to reach. CSO has been using the application since August 2022.

NOTABLE OPEN RECOMMENDATION

OIG issued *Audit of Cost Controls Within the Baghdad Life Support Services Contract Food Services Task Order SAQMMA14F0721* ([AUD-MERO-18-55](#)) in August 2018. In this report, OIG recommended that the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs (NEA) incorporate requirements for food services cost controls and a contractor cost control plan into the new worldwide support services contract and develop an acquisition plan to address their implementation and comprehensive oversight. As of July 2023, the recommendation has been open for almost 5 years. OIG is concerned that without a full implementation of this recommendation, NEA may not adequately assess contractor performance or have a comprehensive basis for holding the contractor accountable in the annual contractor performance evaluations.

UKRAINE OVERSIGHT

In July, OIG released two reports related to Ukraine oversight. In *Review of Ukraine Foreign Assistance Coordination and Oversight* ([ISP-I-23-18](#)), we found that Embassy Kyiv had not updated its Integrated Country Strategy (ICS), the whole-of-government strategic planning document that establishes goals, objectives, and sub-objectives for an embassy. Without an updated ICS, Department bureaus and other agencies lacked guidance for designing programs and performance indicators aligned with common strategic goals. During our review, the Department began to draft a Ukraine assistance strategy for 2023–2025 and the embassy began to update its ICS. In response to the one recommendation we made, the embassy said it would soon submit an updated version of its ICS.

In *Inspection of Embassy Chisinau, Moldova* ([ISP-I-23-19](#)), we highlighted the open manner in which the embassy handled the Ukraine crisis and the decision not to evacuate while fully considering staff security. In a Spotlight on Success, we noted that in the run-up to and in the aftermath of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Embassy Chisinau carried out extensive contingency planning, which the Department cited as best practices to be shared with other embassies.

For complete lists of completed, ongoing, and planned work related to Ukraine, go [here](#).

REPORTS ISSUED

- *Audit of the Management and Administration of the Consular Systems Modernization Program* ([AUD-CGI-23-20](#))
- *Inspection of Embassy Cotonou, Benin* ([ISP-I-23-20](#))
- *Inspection of Embassy Chisinau, Moldova* ([ISP-I-23-19](#))
- *Inspection of Embassy Lomé, Togo* ([ISP-I-23-22](#))
- *Review of Ukraine Foreign Assistance Coordination and Oversight* ([ISP-I-23-18](#))



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