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United States Department of State
and the Broadcasting Board of Governors
Office of Inspector General

Report of Inspection

U.S. Mission to the United Nations and Other International Organizations, Geneva, Switzerland

Report Number ISP-I-08-51A, September 2008

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PURPOSE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY OF THE INSPECTION

This inspection was conducted in accordance with the Quality Standards for Inspections, as issued by the President's Council on Integrity and Efficiency, and the Inspector's Handbook, as issued by the Office of Inspector General for the U.S. Department of State (Department) and the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG).

PURPOSE

The Office of Inspections provides the Secretary of State, the Chairman of the BBG, and Congress with systematic and independent evaluations of the operations of the Department and the BBG. Inspections cover three broad areas, consistent with Section 209 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980:

- **Policy Implementation:** whether policy goals and objectives are being effectively achieved; whether U.S. interests are being accurately and effectively represented; and whether all elements of an office or mission are being adequately coordinated.
- **Resource Management:** whether resources are being used and managed with maximum efficiency, effectiveness, and economy and whether financial transactions and accounts are properly conducted, maintained, and reported.
- **Management Controls:** whether the administration of activities and operations meets the requirements of applicable laws and regulations; whether internal management controls have been instituted to ensure quality of performance and reduce the likelihood of mismanagement; whether instance of fraud, waste, or abuse exist; and whether adequate steps for detection, correction, and prevention have been taken.

METHODOLOGY

In conducting this inspection, the inspectors: reviewed pertinent records; as appropriate, circulated, reviewed, and compiled the results of survey instruments; conducted on-site interviews; and reviewed the substance of the report and its findings and recommendations with offices, individuals, organizations, and activities affected by this review.



**United States Department of State
and the Broadcasting Board of Governors**

Office of Inspector General

PREFACE

This report was prepared by the Office of Inspector General (OIG) pursuant to the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, Section 209 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980, the Arms Control and Disarmament Amendments Act of 1987, and the Department of State and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, FY 1996. It is one of a series of audit, inspection, investigative, and special reports prepared by OIG periodically as part of its oversight responsibility with respect to the Department of State and the Broadcasting Board of Governors to identify and prevent fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement.

This report is the result of an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the office, post, or function under review. It is based on interviews with employees and officials of relevant agencies and institutions, direct observation, and a review of applicable documents.

The recommendations therein have been developed on the basis of the best knowledge available to the OIG, and have been discussed in draft with those responsible for implementation. It is my hope that these recommendations will result in more effective, efficient, and/or economical operations.

I express my appreciation to all of those who contributed to the preparation of this report.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "H.W. Geisel", written in a cursive style.

Harold W. Geisel
Acting Inspector General

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- The inspection took place in Washington, DC, between April 8 and 30, 2008, and in Geneva, Switzerland, between May 2 and 21, 2008. Ambassador Eileen A. Malloy (team leader), Keith McCormick (deputy team leader), William Belcher, Boyd Doty, Jacqueline James, Michael Kirby, and Charles Rowcliffe conducted the inspection.

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CONTEXT

The U.S. Government maintains a large mission to the United Nations and other international organizations in Geneva because that is where the world's nations meet to establish global rules and standards for the law of war, human rights, humanitarian response, environmental protection, business, trade, international broadcasting,

intellectual property, and many other issues. The mission ensures that these rules and standards advance U.S. interests and address the threats, opportunities, and challenges of the 21st century. Geneva, as the European headquarters of the United Nations, is home to roughly 9,000 UN staff members.



U.S. Mission Geneva hosts three separate ambassadors, only one of which, the Ambassador to the United Nations and Other International Organizations, is considered to be a chief of mission (COM) with a letter of authority from the President of the United States. The Ambassador to the Conference on Disarmament and the Ambassador to the World Trade Organization (WTO) both work out of the U.S. mission building and receive public diplomacy, security, and management support from the U.S. Mission to the United Nations, but the COM does not have responsibility for the program direction of these two delegations.

The Ambassador to the UN Organizations in Geneva has authority over all U.S. Government executive branch employees who work in (or visit) Geneva in connection with multilateral work except those who are detailed to the staff of international organizations. Visitors working on bilateral issues fall under the authority of the U.S. Ambassador to Switzerland in Bern.

As it is dedicated solely to multilateral work, the mission contains no consular or commercial sections. Its policy priorities are focused on enhancing international security, promoting human rights, reducing human suffering, promoting economic growth, and increasing the effectiveness of international organizations. While the mission has enjoyed notable success in meeting several of these goals, it has suffered from a lack of clear, consistent policy guidance from Washington in some areas, most notably on the issue of the U.S. Government's views on the Human Rights Council.

Resources available to the mission are seriously constrained. This is due to the high cost of operations in Geneva, exchange rate losses from the growth of a strong Swiss franc against a weak U.S. dollar, Department-wide budget cut backs, and a lack of balance between the entities providing the mission's funding and those using its services, in particular the large conference services program that supports 4,000 official visitors each year. The Office of Inspector General (OIG) team recommended steps to regularize the funding and staffing of this key program. With approximately 90 percent of its International Cooperative Administrative Support Services (ICASS) budget devoted to salaries and benefits, U.S. Mission Geneva was forced to offer buyouts to senior Foreign Service nationals (FSN) in order to meet a six percent rescission in this fiscal year's ICASS budget.

The mission is currently staffed by 79 Department American direct-hire employees and 10 American direct-hire staff from other agencies. There are also 104 staff members locally employed by the Department (including the local guard force) and four other agencies. In addition to the Department, the U.S. Agency for International Development and the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Defense, and Health and Human Services maintain personnel in Geneva. FY 2008 budgets for Geneva were \$11,612,510 from ICASS and \$4,055,400 from program funds.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTION

The U.S. Mission to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva serves as a platform to promote U.S. Government interests to the 40-plus UN agencies and international organizations represented in that city, and also to the more than 250 nongovernmental organizations (NGO) there. The Ambassador, the deputy chief of mission (DCM), and mission staff members face enormous challenges in deciding how best to target the very limited resources available to them. Of necessity, they focus their efforts on the most influential multilateral organizations, those with relevance to the Mission Strategic Plan (MSP) goals and objectives.

The most recent MSP (for FY 2010) outlines six strategic goals for U.S. Mission Geneva. These are supporting the global war on terror and enhancing international security, championing human rights, reducing human suffering, promoting economic growth, increasing the effectiveness of international organizations, and establishing an efficient support platform to achieve U.S. multilateral goals. Of these six strategic goals, the Ambassador personally has played a key role in at least three. In support of strategic goal number two — championing human rights — he has spent hours attending sessions of the Human Rights Council in an effort to promote positive outcomes and to deter decisions inimical to the interests of the U.S. Government. The Ambassador has also devoted considerable time, as have the members of several sections, to increasing the effectiveness of international organizations — strategic goal number five. In particular, he has worked tirelessly to influence the voting on the selection of a new head of the World Intellectual Property Organization — one who is prepared to bring greater transparency and accountability to this important multilateral organization. Finally, he has brought to the mission a very strong focus on improvement of administrative support provision in general, and the organization of the mission's conferences services center in particular.

The FY 2010 MSP was developed through a collaborative process among all elements of the U.S. Mission to the United Nations but it was not, unfortunately, coordinated with the U.S. Mission to the Conference on Disarmament, located in the same building. As the U.S. Mission to the Conference on Disarmament is a major contributor to the funding of the conference services platform at the U.S. mission, as well as being a traditional consumer of its services, they have a strong and legitimate interest in any proposal to reinvent its funding and its role.

The OIG team found virtually no collaboration between the front offices of the U.S. Mission to the United Nations and the U.S. Missions to the Conference on Disarmament and to the WTO except in the areas of security, public affairs, and administrative support. The three ambassadors based in Geneva do not have scheduled sessions to compare notes and to identify where their individual zones of influence might be used to advance the strategic goals of one another. In fact, it is rare that the ambassadors ever see one another, so different are their responsibilities and the multilateral forums assigned to them. The OIG team inspected only the mission to the United Nations, but encouraged all three missions to meet regularly either at the ambassadorial or DCM level.

Relations between the various elements within the U.S. Mission to the United Nations are highly collegial but are also quite stove-piped. The structure of the mission does not lend itself to a high degree of collaboration, with most substantive officers assigned to monitor and influence the work of certain multilateral organizations rather than assigned specific policy issues of high interest to the U.S. Government. This will be discussed in greater detail in the policy implementation section of this report.

The Ambassador takes seriously his responsibility to ensure an equitable level of security to all direct-hire employees under his command and control. He has a regularly scheduled weekly meeting with his regional security officer and the non-commissioned officer in charge of the mission's Marine security guard detachment. In addition, he receives daily written updates from the regional security officer on the progress of the physical security upgrades in progress at the mission and any other pending security issues. The overall regional security program at the U.S. mission was assessed by the OIG team as being in excellent shape, no doubt due in no small part to the strong support provided by the Ambassador and DCM.

The mission's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) program also enjoys the support of the Ambassador. When some in the mission expressed concerns that several of the FSNs who had been let go for cause were of non-Caucasian origin, the Ambassador moved proactively to dispel any suggestion that the severing of these staff members had any relation to their ethnic origin. He also moved quickly to organize sessions to sensitize staff members to the need to recognize and avoid sexual harassment after an incident occurred at the mission.

Before taking up his charge as the President's representative to the UN Agencies in Geneva, the Ambassador developed extensive experience in private business. He brought to this position a hierarchical style of leadership that had served him well in the corporate world. His personal work ethics and standards are of the highest quality, and he expects no less from the members of his staff. (b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)

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For his part, the Ambassador is unapologetically adamant that the appearance of the chancery reflects on the dignity of the President of the United States. He believes that he has made the right decisions on the use of resources entrusted to him by the President and the Secretary of State. He has argued for increased resources for his mission and is very interested in rationalizing the funding of the conference services, gain sharing, and other innovations that could make the U.S. mission an even stronger platform for the approximate 4,000 multilateral delegates that come to Geneva each year.

Public diplomacy work in Geneva receives the complete support of both the Ambassador and the DCM. With the encouragement of the Ambassador, the public affairs section sought additional program funds to expand its activities beyond media work to include more traditional public diplomacy tools such as targeted speaker programs. Public diplomacy tools are incorporated in each of the mission's MSP strategic goals.

With only six entry-level officers (ELO), four of whom are specialists, the mission has never had a formal ELO program. The DCM meets with each of the generalist ELOs once every two months, and his door is always open to any staff member who needs advice or guidance. During the inspection, the DCM agreed to broaden his scheduled meetings to include ELO specialists. The OIG team also encouraged the ELOs to meet as a group in order to develop a more formal ELO program and a proposed list of activities for consideration by the DCM.

RIGHTSIZING

The OIG team identified two possible rightsizing opportunities at the U.S. mission, but neither could be explored in depth due to a lack of statistical information in one case and the need for a rationalization of activities and funding in the second.

The information management (IM) staff at the mission is unusually large. The fact that the mission does not use a help desk tracking system to generate statistics that would document the section's workload made it difficult to determine whether all of the authorized positions were actually needed. This issue is discussed further in the IM section of this report.

The conference services program at the mission is operating with the same funding structure, and performing the same services as it did during the Cold War. The management and resources section of this report will discuss the need for a rationalization of the funding streams for this important component of the U.S. Mission in

Geneva. After the Department is able to reach agreement with the various bureaus and other federal agencies providing funding to this center, and after the mission conducts a review to rationalize the services, taking into account per capita costs, who is using the services, and whether it can continue to offer the full range of services, it is possible that some authorized positions could be identified for elimination or reallocation.

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POLICY AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Unlike many other delegations in Geneva, the U.S. mission contains few officers with prior experience in multilateral affairs. Nevertheless, it has accomplished many of its most important policy goals in political, economic, legal, refugee, and public affairs. Most policy sections have not been significantly affected by controversies in the management area. As recommended below, the mission needs better policy guidance from the Bureau of International Organization Affairs (IO) and needs to make more use of working groups on policy issues to coordinate its work in different UN organizations.

POLITICAL AFFAIRS

The political and specialized agencies section carries out the mission's work on political, labor, and public health issues, along with much of its work on UN budget and management reform. Among other things, it is responsible for U.S. Government interaction with the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the International Labor Organization (ILO), and the World Health Organization.

The section concentrates on human rights. Three officers, including the political counselor and deputy, spend the majority of their time on this issue, which the MSP identifies as the mission's top priority.

This work has become more difficult since the last inspection. In 2006 the Human Rights Commission, whose credibility had been strained when Libya was elected chairman, was abolished and replaced by a new organization known as the Human Rights Council (HRC). Unfortunately, the HRC includes key members who are accused of human rights abuse themselves and others who wish to keep the forum narrowly focused on Israel. Its work is dominated by the Non-Aligned Movement and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. Under a new procedure known as Universal Periodic Review, the HRC reviews each country's record on human rights — including that of the United States — instead of focusing on those accused of violations. In 2007 the United States decided not to seek a seat on the council and to lower its participation.

The mission has received conflicting guidance on how to carry out this new policy. Some bureaus have reprimanded it for attending sessions and thus lending credibility to their deliberations. Others argue that the mission must attend key meetings, if only to prevent adoption of unfriendly resolutions that could pass unchallenged into the UN General Assembly or even into international law. Still others send requests for information and reporting that can only come from attending sessions. Due in part to continuing disagreements between IO and other agencies and bureaus, the Department has never sent the mission basic policy guidance on how to deal with the HRC. As a result, the mission lacks a strategy for dealing with this body or the guidance necessary to determine the appropriate level of engagement.

This determination is all the more essential because the HRC plans to hold far more meetings than its predecessor did. The mission cannot cover such a pace of meetings with its current and projected staffing. In any case, it cannot afford a reactive practice of attending meetings simply because they are called. It needs clear guidance on U.S. policy goals in order to select those meetings at which U.S. interests can be most effectively defended or advanced.

Recommendation 1: The Bureau of International Organization Affairs, in coordination with the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, should provide Mission Geneva with formal guidance clarifying U.S. policy on engagement with the UN Human Rights Council. (Action: IO, in coordination with DRL)

Until last year, the section also devoted extensive efforts to labor. One officer devoted full time to the issue, enabling the United States to use the ILO to promote its goals on labor policy in a broader and more effective forum than available through individual bilateral relations. That position was eliminated in 2007 as part of the Global Diplomatic Repositioning program, which reduced positions in Europe and Washington in order to increase them in China, India, and elsewhere. A supporting office management specialist position was also eliminated.

The loss of the officer position has made it difficult for the mission to cover U.S. interests in the ILO and to respond to requests for information and policy advocacy from the Department and the Department of Labor. The section reduced reporting on labor issues, gave up a time-consuming leadership position in the ILO, and combined its ILO portfolio with that of the officer assigned to cover UN budget and management reform. This in turn required shifting the responsibility for preparing required reports on budget and management reform to the section's ELO. The net effect has been to reduce the attention the section can devote not only to labor issues but to budget and management reform.

A health attaché from the Department of Health and Human Services serves as part of the section but works largely independently. He focuses on enlisting the World Health Organization in improving global public health and combating transnational diseases such as AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria. In contrast to the lack of guidance in other areas, the section receives effective, timely, and authoritative guidance even on such complex issues as how to support Taiwan's desire to gain observer status in the World Health Organization. In view of the growing U.S. contributions to the Global Fund, the OIG team suggested that the section look for ways to support close budget oversight in that organization.

ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

The mission changed the title of its economic section to "economic and scientific affairs" since the last inspection to reflect the growing importance of environmental, scientific, and technological issues in its work. Globalization has increased the importance of negotiations in Geneva on international economic regulation. Developments in such organizations as the International Telecommunications Union, for example, have enormous implications for U.S. industries. As a result, the section deals with a particularly wide array of U.S. interests and UN agencies. Its work is made more difficult by the absence of a clear coordinating point for policy guidance from Washington and the fact that U.S. delegations in Geneva often have few allies for their economic goals.

In accordance with the mission's MSP priorities, the section concentrates its efforts largely on intellectual property rights. The counselor devotes the bulk of her time to this issue. The section cooperates closely on this overlapping subject with the U.S. Mission to the WTO, handling policy aspects while the WTO mission focuses on trade. This work includes a major effort to improve reform and management of the World Intellectual Property Organization, an issue in which the Ambassador took a strong interest. As noted above, a long campaign to replace the director general of the World Intellectual Property Organization came to a head during the inspection. In a close vote, delegations with a wide variety of economic, political, and ideological interests voted after intense debate to release an auditing report that documented charges of corruption and elected a new director general whom the United States had backed.

The successful conclusion of this campaign should now enable the section to reorganize its work. One key goal should be to allow the counselor to devote more time to management. At present, each officer works in isolation, concentrating on a

part of the picture with too little opportunity to reinforce each other's work, back up absent colleagues, or connect the dots between one issue and another. The arrival of an intellectual property rights attaché from the U.S. Patent and Trade Office of the Department of Commerce in 2008 will enable the counselor to carry out her plan to step back, hold more meetings with her staff and other sections, and do more strategic planning.

The section also devotes important energies to environmental, scientific, and technological issues, including climate change. This work has paid important dividends, and the mission has requested an additional position to allow it to take full advantage of a recent shift it sees toward greater willingness to listen to U.S. positions on the issue. Even without an additional position, however, the mission has increased its coverage of this issue through coordination between the economic and public affairs sections. As described below, unusually close cooperation between these sections has expanded the mission's outreach to NGOs and other important players on the issue.

As noted above, the mission often finds it harder to enlist the aid of allies for its trade and economic goals than for political or humanitarian ones. European Union countries that would be key allies on human rights, for example, often do not support U.S. positions in these areas. Despite this, the section led successful efforts to stave off many retrograde proposals in the latest agreements in the most recent UN Conference on Trade and Development. It followed up with an impressive after-action analysis, carefully annotating critical parts of the text and U.S. guidance in a document that will make the job of future U.S. negotiators easier. The OIG team commended the section for this effort and left an informal recommendation that it become a standard practice after key negotiations.

The section's work is made more difficult by uncoordinated guidance from Washington. Too many different offices and bureaus task it individually rather than coordinating their requests. As a result, it lacks sufficient guidance on priorities during busy periods. While policy guidance must come largely from such bureaus as Economic, Energy and Business Affairs or International Oceans, Environmental, Science and Technology Affairs, IO recognizes that it needs to play a stronger role in coordinating all instructions sent to IO missions. However, the bureau has no country desk or other logical coordinating point for Mission Geneva because no one office concerns itself with all or even most of its issues. In an effort to address this problem, the bureau has experimentally designated IO's Office of Technical Specialized Agencies as a de facto mission desk.

Recommendation 2: The Bureau of International Organization Affairs, in coordination with Mission Geneva, should conduct a joint review of how successful designating a de facto country desk has been in providing the mission with a single backup and coordination office and determine whether to make the arrangement permanent. (Action: IO, in coordination with Mission Geneva)

Much of the section's work involves supporting frequent delegations. Many are much larger than they need to be, in part because they involve the interests of so many different agencies and in part because of the desirability of temporary duty in Geneva. While the section does an excellent job of supporting its enormous number of visitors, the OIG inspectors were troubled by the fundraising needed to support some visits. The mission properly requested and received permission from the Under Secretary for Management, for example, to request donations from the American Meteorological Society (AMS) to pay for an upcoming reception at the COM's residence. While AMS has no significant interests that can be affected by the official activities of the mission, some of the U.S. corporations that hold membership in it do. The OIG team left an informal recommendation that the mission take steps to ensure that it is not perceived as soliciting contributions for such events from individual companies.

REFUGEE AND MIGRATION AFFAIRS

The refugee and migration section (RMA) manages U.S. relations with the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Committee of the Red Cross, and the International Organization on Migration. Despite the decline in the value of the dollar, the United States remains the largest donor to all three organizations. In FY 2007, RMA administered a contribution of \$630 million to UN and other organizations in Geneva.

The section has historically been well managed and efficient. It has faced a staffing shortage since September 2007, when the counselor was moved up to replace the previous DCM. The Department did not fill the empty counselor position, but dispatched experienced officers on temporary duty to help the section rearrange portfolios and adjust to the lower staffing level. When all of its temporary vacancies are filled, the section will be adequately staffed. Among other sound practices, it makes good use of a permanent rotational position for one of the many Civil Service employees who carry out much of the work on refugees in Washington.

In contrast to some other sections, RMA receives clear guidance on priorities and policy from Washington. In part, this is because its guidance comes from a single source, the Bureau of Population, Refugee and Migration Affairs. The section is also somewhat insulated from the turmoil in the management section described below because its operations are largely funded separately from those of the rest of the mission. It is represented separately on the ICASS council and has few complaints about those services it does receive.

The mission's MSP assigns a high priority to refugee affairs. It uses a sophisticated indicator of performance, making clear that U.S. goals include not only offering aid to refugees but also working to reduce the number of people who require it through "durable" solutions such as voluntary repatriation, integration, or resettlement. This helps the section go beyond a series of short-term crises to maintain a focus on its policy work with UNHCR to encourage longer term solutions.

While the MSP assigns priority to refugee affairs, the section's actual work is dominated by migration. Records indicate it allocated the bulk of its resources during the first half of 2008 to supporting the election of a U.S. candidate as director general of the International Organization on Migration. During the inspection, the acting chief of the section left Geneva for two weeks to accompany the candidate on visits to key capitals to lobby, while the section organized over 30 meetings in Geneva to press delegations for their vote. This concentration on a single issue seems likely to be more effective than the scatter-shot approach to candidacies in some other UN agencies, where the mission was instructed, for example, to give a full-court press to all six U.S. candidates for certain posts instead of focusing on one. At the same time, such an overwhelming focus is at odds with MSP priorities. Migration is not mentioned, for example, in the Chief of Mission statement in the 2008 MSP. The OIG team left an informal recommendation that the mission carry out and share with Washington an after-action analysis of the costs and benefits of this campaign.

RMA takes seriously its responsibility to press for greater transparency and efficiency in UN institutions while resisting "mission creep." It has been particularly effective in urging budget and other reforms on UNHCR. OIG's inspection of the Bureau of Population, Refugee and Migration Affairs in 2005 revealed that, despite good stewardship of U.S. contributions by the bureau, UNHCR was in a funding crisis. It needed to trim administrative costs and waste in order to continue supporting refugees. Under sympathetic but tough-minded pressure from the mission, UNHCR cut back expenses, tightened internal auditing, and moved staff from Geneva to lower-cost offices in Budapest as well as strengthening the role of its inspector general.

The section carries out these important efforts at UN reform in isolation. As noted above, the economic and political sections also press reform agendas in the organizations with which they deal, and an officer in the political section is broadly responsible for the issue. However, the mission has no working groups or other mechanisms to coordinate reform work in the different sections. It could also make a broader audience in Washington aware of progress on this issue by reporting on reform across the board as a cross-cutting issue, or use such voluntary reporting to support requests to Congress to allow required reports on various aspects of UN reform to be consolidated or combined.

Recommendation 3: Mission Geneva should establish a working group on UN management reform, use it to coordinate the work of all sections on this issue, and submit reports assessing and comparing progress in the various UN institutions in Geneva. (Action: Mission Geneva)

In addition to Department personnel, the section contains a representative from the U.S. Agency for International Development who focuses on humanitarian assistance. She and an agency administrative assistant serve as an integrated part of the section and have experienced no difficulty with coordination, supervision, or support. They work particularly closely with the U.S. Mission to the WTO since food aid is a contentious issue in the Doha Round of negotiations on agricultural and other trade.

At the time of the last inspection, the section also contained a humanitarian assistance liaison officer from the Department of Defense. The Department of Defense eliminated that position in 2005 as operations in Afghanistan and Iraq began to require less coordination in Geneva. While a future crisis could require military temporary duty liaison support, the OIG team concluded that the section can ensure sufficient civilian-military coordination during normal periods without refilling this position.

LEGAL AFFAIRS

The legal affairs section, made up of two lawyers and an office management specialist from the Office of the Legal Adviser, does not focus on specific UN organizations. Instead, it supports the Ambassador, other sections, and visiting U.S. delegations with advice on a wide variety of legal issues that arise during the negotiation or interpretation of agreements, resolutions, and treaties.

The legal adviser and his deputy provide a valuable resource that is rare at U.S. diplomatic missions. Both have extensive experience in multilateral affairs. Often, their advice goes beyond the strictly legal aspects of an issue to include important substantive and tactical considerations. As noted above, the section's expertise on the United Nation's complex rules and procedures helped the mission outmaneuver efforts to suppress reports about the need for changes to reduce corruption at the World Intellectual Property Organization. The United States was only able to vote in that election, for example, because although its contributions to the organization were in arrears, it had not yet lost its right to cast a vote because they were not yet two years overdue.

The legal section was even more deeply involved in the mission's successful handling of the quadrennial conference of worldwide Red Cross bodies at the end of 2007. Many observers worried that the conference could break down over one or both of two contentious issues — U.S. Government adherence to the Geneva Convention and Israeli actions in the occupied Palestinian territories. The Ambassador and the legal, political, refugee, and other sections worked together closely to prepare the legal and political arguments to keep it focused instead on its core humanitarian mission. The mission achieved a major victory when the conference adopted a protocol to the Geneva Convention that did not condemn U.S. actions but did open the way for Israel's national humanitarian agency to become a part of the international Red Cross system.

The Ambassador also makes heavy use of the legal section to support the management section in disputes created by the dismissals of several FSNs. The disputes are described in detail in the section on Diplomatic Readiness below. For several months prior to the inspection, both lawyers devoted as much as 30 percent or more of their time to issues of Swiss employment law. This request diverted the legal section from important work on its core responsibilities, including the mission's top MSP priority of human rights. It also occurred despite the fact that the mission retains a local Swiss lawyer as counsel for this purpose. The OIG team concluded that the mission does not need an additional lawyer for this section, as was briefly considered in 2007.

In addition to its other duties, the legal section provides the mission with badly needed institutional memory. It recently began an effort to create a record of all UN resolutions and the guidance the mission used in supporting, opposing, or amending them. While the U.S. Mission to the United Nations in New York makes extensive use of such a permanent record, Mission Geneva does not. Officers in the political, economic, and other sections told OIG inspectors that such a resource would be of great use in reducing wasted time and influencing multilateral negotiations.

Recommendation 4: Mission Geneva should create a research file of major UN actions and the relevant Washington guidance for use in future negotiations, maintaining it in a form accessible to all sections. (Action: Mission Geneva)

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

A small and well-managed section provides public affairs support to all three U.S. missions in Geneva. It concentrates on multilateral issues, working independently from the bilateral embassy in Bern.

Because of the disparate nature of its work, with different sections engaged in individual efforts and reporting to different bureaus in Washington, the mission's public diplomacy has tended to be reactive and ad hoc. It arranged events for each delegation in its turn but did not focus on a single, overarching theme. It concentrated on the media and made little use of other public diplomacy programs common at a bilateral post.

Since the last inspection, the mission has used a wider range of tools. The current public affairs officer and his deputy have used speaker programs, for example, to expand their outreach to the think tanks, academic institutions, and NGOs that make up an important part of its audience in Geneva. They have worked particularly closely with the economic section to reach more environmental NGOs on issues such as climate change. Most officers throughout the mission see such outreach as a key part of their jobs.

The public affairs officer has also tried to focus public diplomacy efforts on a smaller number of high priority themes. He has been encouraged in this by IO, which cites the successful concentration of some other multilateral missions on one major theme. While the mission would like to focus public diplomacy efforts on its top priority of human rights, it has been inhibited by the same lack of guidance on U.S. policy that has handicapped its diplomatic efforts on this issue.

In part because it is not a bilateral post, the mission makes limited use of the International Visitor Program. Several sections contribute thoughtful nominations, but only the mission to the WTO makes aggressive use of the program to identify and cultivate potential future leaders. The total number of candidates is small. However, the public affairs section keeps good records of visitors and, because so many of them come from other diplomatic delegations, shares useful information with U.S.

embassies in their home countries. The OIG team left an informal recommendation that the mission look for ways to expand participation in this useful program even though the payoff — future leaders with a deeper and more positive understanding of the United States — may be realized at other embassies and missions.

While he does not tend to give extensive interviews or public speeches, the Ambassador takes a strong interest in the public diplomacy program. He pressed the public affairs section, for example, to make more and better use of images as well as text in the mission's Web site. The OIG team encouraged the mission's plans to involve the Ambassador in more public outreach to selected groups.

The public affairs section provides cross-cutting support to the entire mission, for example through its publication of a handbook entitled The Briefing Book on UN Organizations in Geneva. Along with a similar publication by New Zealand that is even more widely used by other delegations, this provides all sections of the mission with a valuable research tool. However, the book addresses only the structure and history of UN organizations; newly arriving officers do not receive a similar book or briefing on the way the organizations work, including how a mission sponsors or amends a resolution or names candidates for elections. The OIG team left an informal recommendation that the public affairs section develop such information and include it in an orientation briefing for new officers.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Agency	U.S. Direct-Hire Staff	U.S. Local-Hire Staff	Foreign National Staff	Total Staff	Total Funding FY 2008
State – D&CP	61	1	17	79	\$4,055,400
State – ICASS	8	2	57	67	\$11,612,510
State – Public Diplomacy	2	-	6	8	\$772,300
State – Diplomatic Security	2	-	12	14	\$2,563,019
State – Marine Security	8	-	1	9	\$215,700
State – Bureau of NP – AC – PM – VC	-	1	9.5	10.5	\$982,191
Defense – OSD - Policy	-	-	1.5	1.5	\$191,600
State – IO/Conferences	-	-	-	-	\$253,000
State – PRM	6	2	-	8	\$555,557
Commerce USPTO	1	-	-	1	\$345,000
HHS – Office of Global Health Affairs	1	1	-	2	\$90,100
AID – Operating Expenses	-	2	-	2	N/A
Overseas Buildings Operations	-	-	-	-	\$3,829,312
Totals	89	9	104	202	\$25,465,689

Mission Geneva's work involves promoting U.S. Government interests in a wide variety of international organizations. This also requires influencing and persuading multiple other diplomatic missions. The mission serves as a platform for large numbers of U.S. Government delegations and maintains extensive conference facilities to support the more than 4,000 delegates it receives annually. Establishing an effective and efficient support platform is one of Mission Geneva's MSP goals.

Mission Geneva's most pressing support issues are addressing current and potential shortfalls in its ICASS and program budgets; regularizing an outdated system for staffing and funding its extensive conference services section; and filling urgent vacancies in its general services and HR units.

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MANAGEMENT OPERATIONS

Mission Geneva's management section has faced a number of challenges over the past nine months, including curtailments by the management counselor and the supervisory general services officer (S/GSO) and the implementation of a buyout offered to LE staff in order to avoid a reduction-in-force due to projected budget shortfalls. Shortly before the arrival of the OIG team, the management section was further reorganized with the planned retirement of the acting management counselor.

The section is currently led by the deputy in the management section. The section provides combined support to all three missions in Geneva, and most of its customers are pleased with the level of support they receive. This is consistent with the above-average scores for most management functions on OIG's workforce and quality of life questionnaire.

[illegible]

The Ambassador and DCM are directly involved in the oversight of the management section. Among other things, the Ambassador implemented what he called an Ideal Management Section Modernization Initiative program. The goal of the program was to impart a sense that working for the mission demanded the very highest standards. The entire management section is involved in the program. The section and unit chiefs meet weekly with the DCM to discuss administrative issues. Imme-

diately prior to the program's implementation, the management officer surveyed the section's customers to determine how it was perceived as performing. The results of the survey were used to develop suggestions to improve services. While this effort seems to duplicate much of what could be determined through the ICASS system's customer feedback survey, the ICASS council did not register concern once it was briefed on the new program.

One of the mission's biggest challenges is to identify ways to make up current and projected budget shortfalls. In addition to offering LE staff a buyout, the mission eliminated an HR LE position, the post language program, and the summer hire program.

International Cooperative Administrative Support Services System

The Department is the single ICASS service provider at Mission Geneva. Twenty-one ICASS subscribers participate on the ICASS council. The chair is the U.S. Agency for International Development representative. Until recently, the ICASS council had not met for over a year. In the two months before the inspection, however, it held two meetings, to discuss the FY 2009 budget and the MSP.

The ICASS council was not involved in the dismissal and buyout decisions carried out by the mission, even though the ICASS budget was directly impacted. Some members of the council expressed concern about this. They cited the impact of these actions on the level of services as well as the restructuring, especially after the relatively high marks the section received on the ICASS Customer Survey in 2008. The service provider noted that time constraints, ongoing negotiations, and privacy issues prevented the involvement of the council. All parties agreed that the council would be involved in future decisions involving the ICASS budget as well as the solutions to the issues to be faced in FY 2009.

Conference Services

A conference services office provides logistical support to approximately 4,000 delegates who come to Geneva for negotiations every year. The number of such visitors has increased significantly since the 2002 OIG inspection. In Geneva's crowded and expensive hotel environment, this unit reserves hotel rooms, conference rooms, and office space; helps prepare official receptions; and arranges transportation and other logistical support. The office, which consists of eight local employees led by a management officer, received high marks from customers for the services it provides.

It also coordinates well with the general services office. However, the OIG team made informal recommendations regarding the need for standard operating procedures to clarify exactly what services the office should provide.

Funding for this office is outdated and inefficient. Financial support for conference services is provided by five different entities, four of which are within the Department. The mission has no way to balance the costs of providing such services against its other needs, or even to determine the costs of the services it provides to conference delegates and allocate the costs to users.

The OIG team agrees with the mission that it needs to regularize the staffing and funding of this important office. Efforts are currently under way to identify a viable way to do so. One key step should be to document the use of resources and work toward a more equitable sharing of costs. Another should be to establish a more effective way to allocate these costs to the delegations that incur them.

The mission is working with both IO and the Bureau of International Security and Nonproliferation to come up with a workable proposal to capture the costs and determine a way to bill visitors for the conference services they use. Several options have been discussed, including putting conference services under ICASS, a working capital fund or other fee-for-service structure. The OIG team did not review documentation regarding the ICASS or fee-for-service options, but did review documentation related to the working capital fund option, which would probably require a base transfer of funds. The OIG team is not in a position to endorse any of the options but believes the restructuring is a move in the right direction. Any proposal the mission presents to the Department should include a review of the costs of the services; the number of and identity of the users; and an examination of the full range of services currently provided to visitors, taking into account the costs per person of each service. It should also determine whether the mix of services should be changed to produce cost efficiencies.

Recommendation 5: Mission Geneva should present a formal proposal to the Department within six months to regularize the staffing and funding of its conference services section. (Action: Mission Geneva)

Human Resources

The mission has an experienced HR officer, but the recent buyout and dismissal actions have reduced the HR unit from four LE staff to one, putting enormous pressure on the officer and the single remaining LE staff.

One of the most pressing issues confronting the section is the after-effects of the combination of dismissals and a buyout over the past nine months. The OIG team reviewed the files involved in a total of six dismissals and a buyout accepted by another six employees. Despite a widespread belief to the contrary, the OIG team concluded that, based on the information made available for review by inspectors, all of these actions were carried out in accordance with the mission's LE staff handbook and Swiss law. As noted in the section on legal affairs, they were extensively reviewed by the mission's legal adviser.

The Ambassador, DCM, and HR officer made extensive efforts to communicate with the LE staff both before and during these actions, but their efforts were constrained by the need to protect the privacy of the individuals involved. (b) (2)
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In the recent past, the mission had endeavored to take advantage of training opportunities for its American and LE staff. However, the current budget crisis has effectively closed that avenue. The turnover in American positions and the need to fill a large number of LE staff vacancies will mean that making training available to ensure proper performance of duties will have to be forced to the top of the limited priorities list. The mission has funds due for exchange rate losses due from the precipitous drop in value of the dollar versus the Swiss franc in addition to funds due for ICASS recoveries. The OIG team informally recommended that if the mission

receives additional funding, it should establish and fund a mission training program prioritized by the importance of the training, both in leadership/management and in individual functional content areas.

[illegible]

The post language program was also a casualty of the budget crisis at the mission and was terminated in April 2008. Some positions at post are language designated, but many officers filling the positions are sent to post without sufficient language training, with the apparent assumption that they can learn at post. Their lack of working-level French language capability limits their ability to perform their duties. The OIG team informally recommended that the mission reestablish a post language program at the earliest possible date if and when resources become available.

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Recommendation 7: Mission Geneva should obtain approval from the Bureau of Human Resources before completing implementation of its proposed pay for performance plan. (Action: Mission Geneva)

General Services and Facilities Maintenance

Mission Geneva is well served by its S/GSO, who was originally paneled to be assistant GSO (A/GSO) and then was stretched into the S/GSO position when the previous S/GSO curtailed. The S/GSO is supported by a first-tour A/GSO who has very helpful prior experience and is quickly learning the job. The mission receives facilities maintenance support from the regional facilities manager based in Bern.

The various subsections of general services received good evaluations and comments in the OIG employee questionnaires, as verified during the inspection. The most recent ICASS customer survey also showed favorable ratings for the general services office.

The 2002 OIG inspection recommended that the mission accumulate cost/benefit statistics on the relative value of LQA operations versus short-term lease (STL) operations. The mission did not proceed with this recommendation beyond an initial review of conversion of the senior staff housing from LQA to STL.

Since then, the real estate market has gotten worse, the dollar has plummeted versus the Swiss franc, and the possibility of having leases turn over every eight to 10 years (for STL) versus every two or three years (for LQA) might present opportunities to reduce the level of increases. The OIG team informally suggested that the mission work with the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO) to accumulate cost data and consider if a limited experiment in switching a range of personnel from senior counselor positions to office management specialists and ELOs (in order to cover the full range of the market) to STL would be feasible and present possible savings. However, this option would have significant impacts on post management and housing support staff, and would likely lead to staff increases in the general services office.

[illegible]

In 2006, the Ambassador observed that the fire hydrant near the main entrance to the mission had begun to develop rust and ordered it repaired or replaced. Because replacing the hydrant would be expensive, and rechroming it even more so, the general services office repainted the hydrant gray. This was functional and eliminated the rust stains, but the Ambassador did not find it adequate. To return it to its original appearance and make sure it blended with the chrome sculpture at the entrance, he ordered that a new chromed hydrant be purchased and installed at a cost of \$8,400.

[illegible]

The extensive property on which the COM residence is located includes a small producing vineyard. The mission pays about \$2,000 to \$3,000 to a local winemaker for services and chemicals to maintain the vineyard, in addition to devoting a certain amount of the LE gardeners' time to its support. This is deemed necessary due to provisions of the lease that require maintenance of the property in the condition it was found. In five of the last seven years, the vineyard has actually produced a sufficient yield of grapes that, when combined with other wine stock, produces a small run of bottles of "Villa Tatiana" pinot noir wine. The yield is in the dozens of bottles (56 bottles in 2006), which the Ambassador uses at the residence and gives as gifts. A total of about \$4,000 was spent on printing special "Villa Tatiana" bottle labels in 2002 and 2006. This effort will terminate in 2009 when the lease ends. The OIG team informally suggested that the mission contact the Office of the Legal Adviser/Ethics to determine if usage of this "wine dividend" either for representational events or as gifts is appropriate.

The mission currently has no warehouse. It is using a vacant house on the COM residence property for furniture storage, and a considerable amount of furniture, safes, and other discards has accumulated in the mission garage. In the past, OBO came to post and studied the possibility of building a small warehouse behind the

mission on the current property. The COM residence property will be given back to the owner in 2009, eliminating the availability of that storage space. The OIG team informally recommended that the mission analyze the current need for and options to provide warehouse space, either on the compound or leased from somewhere nearby in the area. The space could be used for storage, as a driver waiting area, and for certain property and supply tracking functions.

While there have been no major motor vehicle accidents per se in the past year, there have been a series of incidents in the compound access control vehicle entry point with the bollards being raised at the wrong time. The worst of these incidents caused \$5,000 in damage. This will be addressed in the annex report.

The mission had a fire team inspection in March 2008, which resulted in 59 recommendations, many of which will require funding from the Bureau of Diplomatic Security. The facilities manager in Bern has provided post with detailed guidance on the most expeditious way to address these recommendations. The OIG team made an informal recommendation addressing this issue.

Financial Management

Mission Geneva's financial management section performs well. Staff are well trained and knowledgeable about Department regulations and procedures and provide good support in the services it provides, including financial reporting and budgeting. The section's customers are generally pleased with the services it provides, as evidenced by above average scores on the OIG workplace and quality of life questionnaire.

In February 2008, Mission Geneva was informed of a six percent rescission in its ICASS budget and a reduction in its program budget of more than five percent. The section has been working diligently to ensure that the mission lives within its allocated budget. Budgetary cuts have also been exacerbated by the decline in the U.S. dollar against the Swiss franc. Because so much of its budget is dedicated to paying the staff, when the U.S. dollar falls, the mission's cost of doing business increases in terms of U.S. dollars.

As discussed previously, Mission Geneva has had to offer a buyout to address this shortfall. It was already concerned with having sufficient ICASS and program funds for FY 2008. It currently has no discretionary funds and has not had discretionary funds in the ICASS budget for several years. As of late April, the mission was awaiting from the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs IO/EX its ICASS recoveries (\$462,774) and foreign exchange losses in the first half of FY

2008 (\$296,760). The mission is also concerned with foreign exchange losses in the second half of FY 2008 in both ICASS and program funds, which will continue to impact post operations adversely for the remainder of the fiscal year.

The mission has placed itself in the forefront of green technology by installing solar panels on the chancery. So far, the mission estimates that it is saving 28 percent of its electrical cost via the panels. This is a superb and timely experiment that is not only saving money but making an excellent statement about the U.S. commitment to alternate energy sources and building credibility and respect with the Swiss. The mission has also agreed to a multimillion OBO project to replace the chillers in its air conditioning system with magnetic levitation chillers. These sophisticated systems will save the mission even more in electrical costs and help make Mission Geneva OBO's flagship post for green initiatives.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS SECURITY

Mission Geneva operates a comprehensive IM and information systems security program. The IM officer effectively manages the mission's IM and security requirements. OIG assessed standard operating procedures, infrastructure security posture, systems documentation, and performed random checks of post's files. The mission's information technology security posture is excellent.

The mission's information technology staff includes direct-hire American employees who provide conference services, telephone support, and unclassified and classified systems support for approximately 307 workstations, 17 servers, and 652 user accounts. Three LE staff provide unclassified systems support. Two LE staff assist in the mailroom, and two work at the reception desk.

The OIG team identified problems in the areas of mail handling and safety labeling. The mission took steps to begin correcting them during the inspection.

The mission's IM section consists of an unusually large contingent of direct-hire American employees who provide conference services, telephone support, and unclassified and classified systems support. The workload generated by conference services is uneven throughout the year, with surges during the visits of large delegations. While the section was able to provide the OIG inspectors with a description of its normal workload, it does not have a help desk tracking system that would document actual workload statistics. These are necessary to determine the number of personnel the section needs.

The mission's IM help desk currently uses e-mail and verbal requests to track their work orders. This does not allow for the accumulation of statistics. The absence of a help desk tracking system prevents the mission from determining the need for resources and allocating them accordingly.

Recommendation 8: Mission Geneva should implement a help desk tracking system. (Action: Mission Geneva)

The OIG team reviewed the staffing of the mission's IM section to determine whether it was properly rightsized. As noted above, the section has an unusually large contingent of direct-hire American employees. There is a possibility that at least one position could be relinquished.

In 2007 the mission proposed the elimination of one IM position as part of a gain sharing program. It also reassigned an employee to carry out needed information system security officer duties that were not being adequately performed. It reassigned a cleared American to service the large amount of IM equipment in the controlled access area.

Because there is no help desk tracking system to provide statistics of the workload of the IM section, the OIG team does not have sufficient information to recommend the elimination of one IM position at this time. The uneven nature of the workload during the year means that at least a one year sampling of statistics is needed to determine the rightsizing of the IM section.

Recommendation 9: Mission Geneva should develop a plan to collect statistics through a help desk tracking system for one year for use in evaluating whether positions can be eliminated in the information management section. (Action: Mission Geneva)

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EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY AND FEDERAL WOMEN'S PROGRAM

Mission Geneva has an active EEO and Civil Rights Matters program in accordance with Department policy, which includes separate EEO and Federal Women's Programs. During the two-and-one-half years prior to the inspection, employees have filed no formal complaints, but the counselor has frequently counseled employees who had questions or were unsure of their rights. When an isolated incident of sexual harassment occurred, post management acted quickly to conduct meetings with the American staff and with the LE staff to increase awareness of the problem and ensure that it did not occur in the workplace. No other significant problems at the embassy came to the attention of the OIG inspection team. Both American

direct-hire and LE staff were aware of their rights and understood that they were covered under Department policies. An EEO and Federal Women's Program bulletin board displays contact information for the counselors and current information on related issues.

The current EEO counselor will depart post soon. The OIG team informally recommended that the mission act now to ensure that there is no gap in the position and arrange for mandatory training for the successor.

~~**SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED**~~

~~**SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED**~~

QUALITY OF LIFE

COMMUNITY LIAISON OFFICE

Mission Geneva has two energetic and committed community liaison office (CLO) coordinators who split the duties of the position. Unfortunately both are leaving their positions, but post has already initiated actions to find a replacement. The OIG team informally recommended that the mission ensure funds were available to send the new coordinator to the CLO training conference at the earliest opportunity. Evaluations in the OIG questionnaires and comments from personal interviews during the inspection indicated a very favorable regard by the embassy community for the coordinator's efforts and enthusiasm.

The CLO coordinators have worked hard to expand the information sent to incoming American employees to ensure that they understand the challenges and requirements of serving in Geneva, and receive this information early enough to take action. This includes updating the information submitted to the Overseas Briefing Center at the Foreign Service Institute, so that even personnel considering a bid on Geneva can get comprehensive information and understand the complications of a posting to Geneva.

In particular, the coordinators are trying to emphasize the importance of early action to get children into preferred local schools, the exorbitant cost and difficulty of access to day care, and the initial shock of the time and money that must be invested in getting established under the LQA system (especially as regards initial stays in hotels, seeking housing, setting up utilities and transportation, etc.).

Although the coordinators have aggressively sought volunteers, not enough mission officers have volunteered to serve as sponsors for new arrivals. The OIG team informally recommended that Mission Geneva underline to the entire staff the importance of getting officers to serve as sponsors for incoming employees and their families.

MEDICAL SERVICES

Mission Geneva's medical unit is run effectively by an LE American nurse practitioner and a British nurse. Both have just recently attended nurse or nurse practitioner conferences for medical education, which afforded them excellent opportunities to consult and to network with their colleagues and counterparts. They report strong support from the regional medical officer (out of Frankfurt) who visits quarterly and the regional psychiatrist who usually visits twice per year.

Because of an upsurge in the number of patients consulting them, the nurses are having difficulty handling their consultations while keeping up with their administrative requirements. The OIG team informally recommended that the mission perform a cost-benefit analysis on the scope of work of the nurses and the need for more administrative support.

MANAGEMENT CONTROLS

The annual COM management controls certification for FY 2007 did not identify any significant management controls deficiencies. The management officer is the mission's designated management controls officer. A review of work requirements statements for key officers demonstrated that management control elements are included. However, the inspection disclosed significant management control weaknesses over ORE and LQA, as discussed below.

Official Residence Expenses

The designated DCM residence has been vacant since the previous DCM departed post in September 2007. The new DCM, who was reassigned from another position at the mission, chose not to move into the DCM residence, preferring instead to remain in his LQA-funded housing. The current DCM notified the mission HR office in September 2007 that he did not intend to continue the employment of the maid serving at the residence on the ORE staff. He did, however, agree to sign a contract to continue the employment of the chef on the ORE staff.

The DCM signed off on ORE vouchers for the months of October, November, and December of 2007. The voucher for January 2008 was signed by a staff member as the DCM was in Washington on training. He signed off on ORE vouchers for the months of February, March, and April of 2008. Each of these vouchers claimed reimbursement for salaries for ORE staff members to include the maid and the chef, even though no one was living at the DCM residence.

The DCM indicated to the inspectors that he had made use of the chef for representational events and had also made the chef available to other mission members needing help with representational entertaining as well as to assist the mission's conference services with preparation of events. Likewise, the maid had assisted conference services and performed work for the Ambassador's residence, for the Marine Corps Ball, and performed caretaker duties at the unused official residence.

A review of mission records indicated that the salary for the maid at the DCM residence so far this fiscal year was approximately \$21,000, the salary for the chef was approximately \$30,000, and employment taxes for both was over \$9,100. A review of the DCM's representational vouchers for the time period October 2007

through April 2008 indicated that he vouchered 14 official representational events. Five of these representational events he hosted at restaurant facilities, four events he hosted at the mission to include one large reception, four were no host luncheons at restaurants, and one cocktail event was held at the official DCM residence. The DCM's ORE chef prepared the food for the events held at the mission as well as the small cocktail event at the official DCM residence.

Department of State Standardized Regulations Chapter 400 section 411 d. defines ORE household staff as "a person employed to perform household duties at the official residence." Section 454 describes expenditures that may not be reimbursed from or charged to the official residence expense account to include: "expenditures which are properly borne by representation allowance funds (such as staff overtime and extra waiters for official functions or other allowable items under Section 320); expenditures properly borne by any other appropriations as specified by acts of Congress or by internal agency regulations."

The management controls system in place at the mission was not sufficiently robust to prevent the reimbursement to the DCM of salaries for two ORE staff, one of whom did not have a valid contract with the DCM, who actually worked the majority of the time outside of the official residence. As a result, more than \$50,000 in salaries and benefits may have been paid inappropriately.

Recommendation 10: Mission Geneva should strengthen its management controls process to preclude payment for official residence expenses that are not allowable under Department standardized regulations. (Action: Mission Geneva)

Recommendation 11: Mission Geneva should review all official residence expense vouchers for the deputy chief of mission for the months of October 2007 through April 2008 to determine if reimbursements paid to the deputy chief of mission were valid. (Action: Mission Geneva)

Living Quarters Allowance

The new DCM was already residing in an STL house and collecting an LQA when he was reassigned to the position of DCM. He informed the Ambassador upon accepting this new position that he did not wish to move into the official DCM residence. The Ambassador told the OIG team that he concurred with the DCM's request to remain in his leased home.

In September 2007, shortly after being assigned to the DCM position, the new DCM informed the management counselor that he did not wish to move into the official residence. When the management counselor told him that he should move into the residence, the DCM asked the management counselor if there was some other way to resolve this. The management counselor then waited several months to see if another U.S. Government agency might be able to use the DCM residence but that did not come to fruition. In the midst of this the management counselor curtailed, and his duties were assumed by the mission's IM officer. The DCM continued to reside in his leased home and to collect an LQA, and the official residence continued to be empty.

In January 2008, the DCM instructed the acting management counselor to do a cost analysis to see whether it would cost more to break the lease on the official DCM residence or on his leased residence. The results of the study indicated that it would cost the mission a considerable sum to store the representational furniture and fixtures provided by OBO, funds that the mission budget could not sustain. When the OIG inspectors arrived in Geneva in May, the DCM was still in his leased house, still collecting an LQA, and the DCM residence was still unoccupied.

Standardized regulations 132.43 state that an LQA cannot be paid to an officer if a U.S. Government-owned or -leased residence is available. According to 15 FAM 212.4-3, LQA cannot be authorized if appropriate U.S. Government-held housing would remain vacant.

The management controls system in place in Geneva is flawed in that it allowed the DCM to continue to receive an LQA when a suitable official residence was available.

Recommendation 12: Mission Geneva should strengthen its management controls to preclude the payment of a living quarters allowance when a vacant U.S. Government-owned or -leased residence is made available to an officer. (Action: Mission Geneva)

Recommendation 13: The Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, in coordination with the Office of the Legal Adviser, the Bureau of Administration, and the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, should provide an opinion as to whether the living quarters allowance paid to the deputy chief of mission in Mission Geneva should be reimbursed. (Action: EUR, in coordination with L, A, and OBO)

Management Procedures

OIG found at least one instance where Mission Geneva had advanced funds for representation. In this instance, ORE staff was advanced the sum of \$4,000 for a representational event. This is contrary to 31 U.S.C. 3324, which prohibits advancement of funds for representation.

Recommendation 14: Mission Geneva should comply with 31 U.S.C. 3324 with regard to advancing funds for representational events by ceasing this practice, review and update mission procedures for representation, and distribute these to employees in an updated administrative notice. (Action: Mission Geneva)

Time and attendance processing for the Ambassador's driver is currently performed in the front office. To ensure better internal controls and to align post with prevailing practices worldwide, the OIG team informally recommended that this duty be moved back to the general services unit, with the appropriate individual from the front office signing off on the hours worked. This would also facilitate more efficient use of the driver during periods when the Ambassador is away from post.

The OIG team informally recommended that the general services unit perform a cost/benefit analysis of engaging a second driver for the Ambassador so that proper scheduling could eliminate or at least reduce the overtime expense that the Ambassador's driver is currently generating (estimated to be in excess of \$42,000 for the second half of FY 2008).

The mission has experienced some confusion and procedural lapses, including several unauthorized commitments from outside the general services office, in procurement of goods and services in the last year. The current contracting officers (the S/GSO and the A/GSO) have already implemented internal controls mechanisms for procurement. To eliminate confusion and educate the entire mission, the

OIG team informally recommended that the management officer, in conjunction with the general services unit, should draft and publish an administrative procedure that explains clearly the steps to the procurement process, including who can and who cannot commit U.S. Government funds, how to prevent unauthorized commitments, and how to ensure that ordered items are properly received and accounted for before issuance.

The OIG team also informally recommended that the mission review and reissue its list of designated duties to make it complete and up to date. The OIG team made additional informal recommendations addressing issues in cashier operations and overtime procedures.

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Recommendation 8: Mission Geneva should implement a help desk tracking system. (Action: Mission Geneva)

Recommendation 9: Mission Geneva should develop a plan to collect statistics through a help desk tracking system for one year for use in evaluating whether positions can be eliminated in the information management section. (Action: Mission Geneva)

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INFORMAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Informal recommendations cover matters not requiring action by organizations outside of the inspected unit and/or the parent regional bureau and are not subject to the OIG compliance process. However, any subsequent OIG inspection or on-site compliance review will assess the mission's progress in implementing the informal recommendations.

Political and Economic Affairs

Many officers are keeping important records in personal files, where they are not easily available to colleagues and could be automatically deleted on the individual's departure. Not organizing them by year makes culling and retiring files more difficult.

Informal Recommendation 1: Mission Geneva should establish standard operating procedures for policy sections to maintain key subject files in common drives to which all section officers have access and retire the files on schedule.

Some U.S. negotiators in Geneva are handicapped by a lack of familiarity with previous actions and decisions in the organizations with which they deal.

Informal Recommendation 2: Mission Geneva should prepare and maintain a file of after-action analyses of major resolutions and agreements for use in future negotiations.

The mission properly obtained Department permission to request donations from the AMS in order to host a reception for an AMS delegation but risks the appearance of a conflict of interest if it becomes involved in discussions over contributions by individual companies with membership in AMS.

Informal Recommendation 3: Mission Geneva should contact the Office of the Legal Adviser and take steps to ensure that raising funds for hospitality for visiting delegations avoids the appearance of soliciting funds from individual companies.

Public Affairs

The mission makes less use of exchanges than do many bilateral posts.

Informal Recommendation 4: Mission Geneva should look for ways to expand its International Visitor Program.

The mission produces a valuable book on the structure and organization of UN agencies, but new arrivals receive no similar information on procedures in these organizations.

Informal Recommendation 5: Mission Geneva should prepare a guide to basic procedures in key UN organizations and include it in the orientation program for all newly arriving officers.

Resource Management

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Informal Recommendation 6:

The conference services section does not have standard operating procedures that describe and clarify the services it does and does not provide to its customers.

Informal Recommendation 7: Mission Geneva should develop and issue to its customers standard operating procedures on the services that the conference services section provides to its customers.

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Informal Recommendation 8:

The turnover in American positions and need to fill a large number of LE staff vacancies will mean that making training available to ensure proper performance of duties will have to be forced to the top of the limited priorities list.

Informal Recommendation 9: Mission Geneva should establish and fund a mission training program, prioritized by relative importance, in leadership/management and individual functional content areas.

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The post language program was a casualty of the budget crisis at the mission and was terminated in April 2008.

Informal Recommendation 11: Mission Geneva should reestablish the post language program at the earliest possible date that resources become available.

The current EEO counselor will depart post soon.

Informal Recommendation 12: Mission Geneva should act now to ensure that there is no gap in the Equal Employment Opportunity position and arrange for mandatory training for the successor.

Under its current LQA policy, the mission's employees spend a large percentage of their time during their first months at post searching for housing. The mission has no record of the results of the analysis of the costs and benefits of switching from LQA to short-term government leases as recommended in the 2002 OIG inspection.

Informal Recommendation 13: Mission Geneva should work with Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations to accumulate cost data and consider if a limited experiment in switching a range of personnel to short-term lease housing would be feasible and present possible savings.

The mission is currently spending \$7,450 per year of program funds in support of accommodations for interns.

Informal Recommendation 14: Mission Geneva should request the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs to determine whether such expenditures for housing are permissible under the Department's intern program.

The mission produces grapes from a vineyard located on the Ambassador's residence.

Informal Recommendation 15: Mission Geneva should contact the Office of the Legal Adviser to determine whether it can use the bottles of wine from this sale for representational events or as gifts.

The mission currently has no warehouse and is storing furniture in a property on the Ambassador's residence grounds, which will be given back in 2009.

Informal Recommendation 16: Mission Geneva should analyze the current need for and options to provide warehouse space, either on the chancery compound or leased from somewhere nearby in the area.

Many of the 59 recommended actions in a March 2008 fire and safety inspection have not been addressed.

Informal Recommendation 17: Mission Geneva should immediately complete those fire inspection recommendations that do not require outside funding and develop a plan to resolve the remainder as soon as funding is available.

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Quality of Life

The mission's current funding crisis makes it difficult to provide essential training to the successors of departing CLO coordinators, but the work of this unit is important to mission-wide morale.

Informal Recommendation 21: Mission Geneva should budget funds to train the incoming community liaison office coordinators at the earliest opportunity.

In part because staffing cuts and budget shortages have made their work more difficult, too few mission officers are finding time to serve as sponsors for new arrivals.

Informal Recommendation 22: Mission Geneva should underline to its entire staff the importance of serving as sponsors to incoming employees so that they can get off to a good start.

The nurses in the health unit are having difficulty handling their consultations while keeping up with their administrative requirements.

Informal Recommendation 23: Mission Geneva should conduct a cost/benefit analysis of the scope of services provided by the nurses in the health unit and the possible need for some part-time eligible family member administrative support.

Management Controls

Time and attendance for the Ambassador's driver is being performed by his office rather than by the general services office.

Informal Recommendation 24: Mission Geneva should reassign the duty of keeping time and attendance for the Ambassador's driver to the general services office, with appropriate individuals from the front office signing off on the hours worked.

The mission is paying large amounts of overtime to the Ambassador's driver.

Informal Recommendation 25: Mission Geneva should perform a cost/benefit analysis for engaging a second Ambassador's driver to eliminate the need for overtime.

The mission has experienced some confusion and procedural lapses in procurement.

Informal Recommendation 26: Mission Geneva should publish an administrative procedure that clearly explains the steps in the procurement process, including who can and cannot commit U.S. Government funds, how to prevent unauthorized commitments, and how to ensure that ordered items are properly received and accounted for before issuance.

The mission's current list of designated duties is incomplete and outdated.

Informal Recommendation 27: Mission Geneva should issue a comprehensive list of designated duties that reflects all recent changes.

A review of cashier's files showed that supervisors of subcashiers do not always perform required quarterly or monthly unannounced reconciliations of the subcashier's advance in accordance with 4 FAH-3 H-397.2-3.

Informal Recommendation 28: Mission Geneva should perform unannounced reconciliations of the subcashier's advances as required by Department regulations.

A review of files for overtime and compensatory time found several instances of overtime not being approved in advance of actual time reported.

Informal Recommendation 29: Mission Geneva should establish a policy on overtime and issue an administrative notice reiterating the requirement in Department regulations that all overtime to be approved in advance.

PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS

	Name	Arrival Date
Ambassador	Warren W. Tichenor	06/06
Deputy Chief of Mission	Mark Storella	08/06

Chiefs of Sections:

Management (Acting)	Dana Williams	08/07
Program Coordination	Jack Ferraro	08/07
Political and Specialized Agencies	Michael Klecheski	07/07
Economic and Science Affairs	Lisa Carle	08/04
Refugee and Migration Affairs (Acting)	David Reimer	08/06
Legal Affairs	Jeffrey Kovar	08/05
Public Affairs	David R. Gilmour	08/07

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ABBREVIATIONS

A/GSO	assistant general services officer
AMS	American Meteorological Society
CLO	community liaison office
COM	Chief of Mission
DCM	deputy chief of mission
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunity
ELO	entry-level officer
FSN	Foreign Service national
HR	human resources
HRC	Human Rights Council
ICASS	International Cooperative Administrative Support Services
ILO	International Labor Organization
IM	information management
IO	Bureau of International Organization Affairs
LE	locally employed (staff)
LQA	living quarters allowance
MSP	Mission Strategic Plan
NGO	nongovernmental organization
OBO	Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations
ORE	official residence expense
OIG	Office of Inspector General
RMA	refugee and migration section

S/GSO	supervisory general services officer
STL	short-term lease
UNHCR	UN High Commission for Refugees
WIGI	within-grade increases
WTO	World Trade Organization

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and resources hurts everyone.

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