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Office of Inspector General  
United States Department of State

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ISP-I-26-05

Office of Inspections

January 2026

# Inspection of Embassy Phnom Penh, Cambodia

BUREAU OF EAST ASIAN AND PACIFIC AFFAIRS

UNCLASSIFIED



# HIGHLIGHTS

Office of Inspector General  
United States Department of State

ISP-I-26-05

## What OIG Inspected

OIG inspected the executive direction, policy and program implementation, resource management, and information management operations of Embassy Phnom Penh.

## What OIG Recommends

OIG made 8 recommendations to Embassy Phnom Penh. In its comments on the draft report, the embassy concurred with all 8 recommendations. OIG considers all 8 recommendations resolved. The embassy's response to each recommendation and OIG's reply can be found in the Recommendations section of this report. The embassy's formal response is reprinted in its entirety in Appendix B.

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OFFICE OF INSPECTIONS

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Inspection of Embassy Phnom Penh, Cambodia

## What OIG Found

- The Chargé d'Affaires, ad interim, and acting Deputy Chief of Mission demonstrated strong leadership, positive working relationships, and compliance with ethical standards, effectively supporting the embassy's mission and staff well-being.
- Embassy Phnom Penh's Political-Economic Section met Department of State standards for policy implementation and reporting, and the Public Diplomacy Section's efforts were integrated embassy-wide and supported the administration's goals.
- The embassy's Consular Section generally met Department standards and addressed several identified issues during this inspection.
- Embassy Phnom Penh had some deficiencies related to facility management and general services.
- The embassy had several deficiencies with the emergency radio program, performance of information system security officer duties, and records management programs.
- Spotlight on Success: The embassy introduced an innovative leadership program known as Motivating Excellence through Networking Training and Outstanding Resources. The program was open to all members of the embassy community and provided career advice, leadership tips, and insights on American management styles.

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## CONTEXT



**Figure 1:** Map of Cambodia (Source: CIA World Factbook, as of July 2025).

Located in Southeast Asia on the Gulf of Thailand, Cambodia shares land borders with Thailand, Vietnam, and Laos. Cambodia has a population of more than 17 million people. The communist Khmer Rouge regime rose to power in 1975 after the country's 1970 to 1975 civil war. Border skirmishes between Cambodia and Vietnam, begun in 1975, escalated into open warfare by 1977 with subsequent invasion and occupation in December 1978. In 1991, the Paris Peace Agreements formally ended the Cambodian – Vietnamese war. The agreement led to the deployment of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia, a peacekeeping mission that ended in 1993, after which Cambodia entered a period of peace and stability.

The United States and Cambodia established full diplomatic relations after Cambodia's 1993 democratic elections. In 2017, the Cambodian government suspended joint military exercises with the United States and has since limited engagement with U.S. defense institutions. Despite these challenges, the United States remains engaged with Cambodia on democracy, human rights, and economic development issues. The two countries actively collaborate on law enforcement, human trafficking prevention, and unexploded ordnance removal.

The United States is Cambodia's second-largest trading partner and largest export market. In 2024, Cambodia imported \$322 million in goods from the United States and exported \$12.7 billion in Cambodian goods to the United States.

According to the Department of State's (Department) biennial ranking,<sup>1</sup> Embassy Phnom Penh is considered a Category 3 embassy. The Department describes a Category 3 embassy as "a medium-sized mission in a country with which the United States has an active bilateral relationship, in some cases supplemented by shared regional political and economic interests." Other U.S. government agencies represented at the embassy included the Departments of Defense, Justice, and Homeland Security; United States Agency for International Development (USAID);<sup>2</sup> Peace Corps; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; and National Institutes of Health.

<sup>1</sup> The Department's rankings of its overseas posts are based on the "level and type of work required to achieve our bilateral and multilateral core diplomatic mission." Overseas posts are ranked on a scale from 1 to 5+.

<sup>2</sup> In July 2025, USAID ceased operations, and the Department assumed responsibility for select foreign assistance programs and activities formerly administered by USAID.

OIG evaluated the embassy's executive direction, policy and program implementation, resource management, and information management consistent with Section 209 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980.<sup>3</sup> A related classified inspection report includes discussion of the embassy's security program and issues affecting the safety of mission personnel and facilities.

On January 21, 2025, the Secretary of State issued guidance to the Department on the new administration's priorities.<sup>4</sup> The Department subsequently disseminated initial guidance on foreign assistance, public diplomacy, consular operations, personnel evaluation, planning and policy documents, and other Department activities. At the time of this inspection, the Department was developing detailed implementation guidance for these and other policy initiatives. Therefore, the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) did not assess the embassy's implementation of the new guidance as part of this inspection.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTION**

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OIG assessed Embassy Phnom Penh's leadership based on interviews, staff questionnaires, and OIG's review of documents and observations of embassy meetings and activities during this inspection.

### **Tone at the Top and Standards of Conduct**

The Chargé d'Affaires (Chargé), a career Foreign Service officer, arrived at the embassy as Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) in July 2023, and assumed duties as Chargé in August 2024. Prior to her arrival in Phnom Penh, she served as DCM at Embassy Dushanbe, Tajikistan. At the time of this inspection, the Management Officer was the acting DCM.

OIG found both the Chargé and the acting DCM demonstrated the leadership and management principles outlined in 3 Foreign Affairs Manual (FAM) 1214b<sup>5</sup> particularly in communications and fostering resilience. The Front Office promoted working relationships among staff by listening and providing feedback to embassy employees at town hall, Country Team, and other embassy meetings. For example, embassy staff told OIG how they appreciated a January 2025 town hall meeting the Chargé held to share and clarify information in the administration's executive orders that could affect both U.S. direct-hire and locally employed (LE) staff. In interviews and survey responses U.S. direct-hire and LE staff praised the Chargé and acting DCM for their accessibility, collaborative style, and inclusiveness, citing their drop-in visits to embassy sections, and participation in embassy working group meetings.

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<sup>3</sup> See Appendix A for additional details.

<sup>4</sup> Cable 25 STATE 5156, "New Administration Priorities," January 21, 2025.

<sup>5</sup> The Department's leadership and management principles outlined in 3 FAM 1214 are (1) model integrity, (2) plan strategically, (3) be decisive and take responsibility, (4) communicate, (5) learn and innovate constantly, (6) be self-aware, (7) collaborate, (8) value and develop people, (9) manage conflict, and (10) foster resilience.

## **Execution of Foreign Policy Goals and Objectives**

OIG found the Chargé fulfilled her responsibilities to oversee the embassy's activities representing the interests of the United States as defined in 2 FAM 113.1b and in accordance with Department's focus on a safer, stronger, and more prosperous America.<sup>6</sup> The Chargé had broad access to senior Cambodian officials and engaged regularly with them and with civil society leaders on cyber scams, trafficking in persons, and other bilateral issues. The Chargé led the embassy's successful effort to persuade Cambodian officials to facilitate the repatriation of 12 Cambodian nationals from the United States between February and April 2025. Based on interviews and document reviews, OIG determined that the Chargé kept Washington entities regularly and appropriately informed regarding meetings with Cambodian government officials and civil society and used media and public diplomacy events to inform Cambodian government officials as well as the general public in Cambodia.

## **Adherence to Internal Controls**

OIG found the embassy's FY 2024 Statement of Assurance generally complied with Department management guidelines in 2 FAM 022.7, 2 FAM 024d, and cables 24 STATE 33782,<sup>7</sup> and 25 STATE 980.<sup>8</sup> Both the Chargé and acting DCM were engaged in the Statement of Assurance process, with the acting DCM meeting throughout the process with section heads to discuss relevant documentation required to support the statement. However, OIG identified several internal control issues that are detailed in the Information Management section of this report.

## **Security and Emergency Planning**

OIG found the Chargé and acting DCM fully supported the embassy security program consistent with Department standards in 12 Foreign Affairs Handbook (FAH)-1H-762a requiring embassy leadership to emphasize emergency preparedness and participate in emergency planning. OIG verified the embassy's emergency action plan was up to date and the Chargé and acting DCM took part in drills as required by Department guidance.

## **Equal Employment Opportunity**

OIG found Embassy Phnom Penh's Equal Employment Opportunity program complied with Department standards in 2 FAM 1511.1a and leadership principles in 3 FAM 1214b(6). The embassy had one U.S. direct-hire Equal Employment Opportunity Counselor and two LE staff Equal Employment Opportunity Liaisons and equal employment opportunity information was displayed in the embassy's public areas.

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<sup>6</sup> Cable 25 STATE 13056, "Message from Secretary Rubio to Chiefs of Mission," February 13, 2025.

<sup>7</sup> Cable 24 STATE 33782, "2024 Statement of Assurance Information and User," April 2, 2023.

<sup>8</sup> Cable 25 STATE 980, "Your Role and Responsibilities for Management Controls and Oversight Over Post Operations," January 6, 2025.

## Developing and Mentoring Foreign Service Professionals

OIG found Embassy Phnom Penh had a well-structured First- and Second-Tour (FAST) program, as required in 3 FAM 2713b. Through monthly meetings with the acting DCM, FAST program coordinators developed a calendar of embassy activities associated with 9 tasks to help build competency in 10 professional skills identified by the Chargé. These included public speaking, staff supervision, acting as a control officer, and cable writing. The Chargé and acting DCM participated in FAST activities and encouraged section chiefs to include FAST officers during in-country travel, as notetakers in meetings and public diplomacy events. Both FAST officers and eligible family members told OIG they appreciated the Chargé and the acting DCM's mentoring and career advice.

### Spotlight on Success: Motivating Excellence through Networking Training and Outstanding Resources Program

Embassy Phnom Penh introduced an innovative Motivating Excellence through Networking Training and Outstanding Resources (MENTOR) program, spearheaded by the Chargé and acting DCM. The program welcomed all members of the embassy community, including eligible family members, and was coordinated by a volunteer committee of mid-level officers and LE staff who provided career advice, leadership tips, and insights on American management styles. The program used a "speed-dating" style session to match potential mentors and mentees. Mentors were selected from outside the employees' supervisory chain and sections, ensuring an unbiased mentorship experience. In addition to personalized mentor-mentee pairings, the MENTOR committee organized sessions on topics of general interest, such as interviewing skills. This initiative highlighted the embassy's commitment to professional development and community engagement.

## POLICY AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

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OIG assessed Embassy Phnom Penh's policy and program implementation through a review of the advocacy and analysis work of the Political-Economic and Public Diplomacy Sections, and the U.S. citizen and visa services provided by the Consular Section. OIG found the embassy generally met Department requirements for policy and program implementation.

### Political-Economic Section

OIG reviewed the Political-Economic Section's leadership and management, policy implementation, reporting and advocacy, Leahy vetting,<sup>9</sup> and commercial promotion functions. Through interviews with Department officials and interagency partners, OIG determined that

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<sup>9</sup> The Leahy Amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 prohibits the United States from furnishing certain assistance to a unit of a foreign security force if the Department has credible information that the unit has committed a gross violation of human rights. See 22 United States Code (U.S.C.) § 2378d and 9 FAM 303.8-5(B). Leahy vetting is the process of determining whether the Department has credible information that units or individuals proposed to benefit from certain assistance have committed a gross violation of human rights. The Department helps implement a similar law applicable to "amounts made available to the Department of Defense" for assistance to foreign security forces. See 10 U.S.C. § 362.

the section regularly engaged with Department policy offices and collaborated with other agencies. Washington interlocutors commended the section's responsiveness to requests for assistance and the usefulness of its reporting, including daily email updates known as Official-Informals.

Additionally, OIG reviewed 75 reporting cables prepared by the embassy from September 2024 through February 2025 and found the reporting to be relevant to U.S. interests in topics such as military-to-military engagement, countering transnational crime, improving market conditions for U.S. companies, and addressing civil liberties and human rights. Recipients complimented the quality of the reporting on cyber scamming activities and praised the embassy's engagement on commercial issues, human rights, macroeconomic subjects, and labor and trade-related matters. During this inspection, the section updated its Leahy vetting standard operating procedure. Overall, OIG determined the Political-Economic Section generally complied with Department standards.

## **Public Diplomacy**

OIG reviewed the Public Diplomacy Section's leadership, strategic planning, reporting, resource and knowledge management, federal assistance awards, educational and cultural programs, media engagement, and American Spaces.<sup>10</sup> OIG found public diplomacy efforts were well integrated embassy-wide and supported the administration's goals. In the absence of an operative Integrated Country Strategy and a Public Diplomacy Implementation Plan,<sup>11</sup> the section organized its work around the Department's four priority policy areas for public messaging.<sup>12</sup> The section was represented in embassy working groups and coordinated with other sections on messaging and complementary lines of programmatic action. The Public Diplomacy Section oversaw four American Spaces – a flagship American Space, known as AmCam, near the embassy in Phnom Penh, and smaller spaces in Battambang, Kampong Cham, and Siem Reap. The embassy's American Spaces supported a full range of public diplomacy

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<sup>10</sup> American Spaces are Department operated or supported public diplomacy facilities designed to attract and engage targeted foreign audiences with activities such as English language programs, policy and cultural dialogues, and digital resources. American Spaces are partnerships with local host institutions offering a range of programming, governed by a memorandum of understanding between the institution and the embassy.

<sup>11</sup> On January 22, 2025, the Department suspended all extant Integrated Country Strategy documents and Public Diplomacy Implementation Plan documents as inoperative pending further guidance. See Cable 25 STATE 6078 "Implementing E.O. 14145, 14167, 14171 - Promoting Equality and Merit Instead of Discriminatory and Revisionist Activities," January 22, 2025.

<sup>12</sup> The section drew from the Department's Bureau of Global Public Affairs summary in February 2025 of the four areas of priority policy focus for the purposes of public messaging as (1) Make America Safer – Curb Illegal Immigration and Secure Our Borders; (2) Make America More Prosperous – Ensure Fair Economic and Trade Relationships; Restore and Maintain American Dominance In Energy, Science, Technology, Cybersecurity, and AI; (3) Make America Stronger – Combatting Adversarial Actors; and (4) Celebrate American Excellence – Spotlight On America's Achievements, Innovation, and Leadership.

programs, including English language programs, education advising, U.S. speakers, alumni engagement, and exchange programs.<sup>13</sup>

Discretionary funds for the section's grant-supported program activity from FY 2022 to FY 2024 totaled approximately \$374,000 per fiscal year. Out of a total of 118 grants awarded from FY 2022 to FY 2024, OIG reviewed 20 (12 closed, 4 open, and 4 expired) worth \$1.7 million and found they generally complied with Department standards.<sup>14</sup> OIG's grant review included assessing compliance with the administration's federal assistance documentation policies and found that the Public Diplomacy Section was making efforts to comply when new policies were issued. The section's reporting included cables, highlights, and media summaries and reactions. As a best practice, the section uploaded cable reporting into recent grants files to supplement required monitoring reports. Overall, OIG determined the embassy's public diplomacy activities met Department standards and guidance.

## **Consular Operations**

OIG reviewed Embassy Phnom Penh's consular operations, including U.S. citizen services, crisis preparedness, management controls, visa services and processing, and fraud prevention programs.

The Consular Section's nonimmigrant visa workload nearly doubled from 2022 to 2024. This growth was partly due to an influx of nonimmigrant visa applicants from Burma. High rates of relationship fraud complicated immigrant visa work in Cambodia, and Embassy Phnom Penh had the highest refusal rate in the world for K-1 fiancée visas. After returning to full staffing in summer 2024, the Consular Section eliminated visa backlogs and managed a number of complex American Citizens Services cases, including high-profile U.S. citizen arrests.

During this inspection, Embassy Phnom Penh corrected several issues identified by OIG. Specifically, the Consular Section:

- Updated consular systems user roles to comply with the requirements of 7 FAH-1 H-660.
- Installed in its consular waiting room the U.S. Government Fact Sheet on Female Genital Mutilation or Cutting in English and Khmer (9 FAM 504.10-4(A)(1)).
- Formally designated in writing a Consular Systems Administrator (7 FAH-1 H-633).
- Began reviewing 100 percent of immigrant visa refusals that could not be overcome by the presentation of additional evidence (9 FAM 504.11-3(A)(2)a(2)).

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<sup>13</sup> Objectives for American Spaces, as defined by 10 FAM 382, are English language learning and teacher training; educational advising and promoting study in the United States; alumni networking, projects, and activities; cultural and outreach programs; and information about the United States.

<sup>14</sup> OIG reviewed compliance with Federal Assistance Directive 7.0 (October 2022) and subsequent revisions, as applicable, as well as Federal Assistance Management Advisory Number 2025-07 on Implementation of the President's Executive Order 14173: Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity (February 4, 2025) and as amended (February 7, 2025) and found that the section generally complied with those guidelines.

- Reminded nonimmigrant visa adjudicators to provide all applicants requiring a “Wilberforce” briefing<sup>15</sup> the appropriate pamphlet and to enter a case note in the nonimmigrant visa processing system (9 FAM 402.3-9(C)(2)a(1) and (b)).
- Conducted annual namechecks of the embassy’s Citizen Liaison Volunteers<sup>16</sup> (7 FAM 074c).

OIG found that Phnom Penh’s Consular Section generally complied with 7 FAM, 7 FAH-1, 8 FAM, 9 FAM, applicable statutes, and other Department policies.

## RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

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OIG reviewed Embassy Phnom Penh’s internal control systems in general management, facility management, financial management, human resources, and general services operations. During this inspection, the embassy corrected 11 issues identified by OIG. Specifically, the embassy:

- Updated reports for foreign travel per diem rates and post differential allowances (Department of State Standardized Regulation, Sections 074.2 and 075.1).
- Relocated two 55-gallon drums of engine oil from the off-site warehouse to a secure area and removed loose stepping stones from the construction of a pathway in the chancery compound to prevent the items from being used as weapons of opportunity (15 FAM 962o).
- Applied barcode asset tags on accountable property such as printers and scanners and entered the data into the Integrated Logistics Management System (ILMS)<sup>17</sup> (14 FAH-1 H-312.8-1a).
- Obtained temporary authorization from the Department’s Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations to continue its purchase of bottled water, ordinarily considered a personal expense, for its local guard staff posted at residences (4 FAM 447.3a).
- Updated contracting officer’s representative certifications issued by the Department’s Office of the Procurement Executive (14 FAH-2 H-143a).

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<sup>15</sup> The William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008, codified at 8 U.S. C. §1375b, requires consular officers to ensure that applicants for certain categories of exchange and temporary work travel are made aware of their legal rights under federal immigration, labor, and employment laws.

<sup>16</sup> Citizen Liaison Volunteers are private U.S. citizens who assist consular sections in several ways, including emergency assistance to U.S. citizens, disseminating information, identifying local resources to assist U.S. citizens, and maintaining local contacts who might be of use to consular operations. See 7 FAM 073b.

<sup>17</sup> ILMS is an integrated web-based system that encompasses all Department supply chain functions in one system. ILMS is designed to upgrade Department supply chain management by improving operations in areas such as purchasing, procurement, warehousing, transportation, property management, personal effects, and diplomatic pouch and mail.

- Completed mandatory performance review of contractor for the storage and logistical services contract in the Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System<sup>18</sup> (14 FAH-2 H-572d<sup>19</sup> and 48 Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.) 42.1502a)).
- Began the required process to clear 211 transactions from its suspense deposits abroad<sup>20</sup> account dating back to 2008 (4 FAM 326.2-7b).
- Developed an accounts receivable policy and requested deployment of the Department's Application Development Group's accounts receivable module to track employee accounts receivables (4 FAM 033.2-6).
- Completed the required annual chief of mission anti-nepotism review for all embassy employees (3 FAM 8314).
- Conducted refresher training for all 37 timekeepers lacking documented refresher training and mandated initial time and attendance training for the five embassy timekeepers unable to provide verification of prior completion (4 FAH-3 H-525.2-1 and 4 FAH-3 H-525.1-3).
- Implemented the use of an authorized standard form for requesting and approving LE staff premium compensation (4 FAM 518b).

Overall, OIG found Embassy Phnom Penh's Management Section generally implemented required processes and procedures in accordance with applicable laws and Department standards, with the exceptions noted below.

## **Facility Management**

### ***Embassy Fire Protection Program Did Not Fully Comply With Department Standards***

OIG found Embassy Phnom Penh's fire protection program did not fully comply with Department standards. During OIG's walk-through of the Chief of Mission Residence, Deputy Chief of Mission Residence, and five embassy staff residences, OIG found embassy staff had not documented monthly visual inspections of fire extinguishers, contrary to the requirements in 15 FAM 843d. OIG also observed that all fire extinguishers in the warehouse had missing inspection tags and found no evidence they were inspected monthly as required per 15 FAM 843c. These deficiencies occurred due to insufficient management oversight. Failing to comply with the Department's fire protection standards increases the risk of injury, loss of life, and damage to property.

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<sup>18</sup> The Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System is the government-wide evaluation reporting tool for all past performance reports on contracts and orders. An annual performance assessment must be done in the system for each contract above the simplified acquisition threshold of \$250,000, according to 48 C.F.R. § 42.1502(b) and 48 C.F.R. § 2.101.

<sup>19</sup> The contracting officer is responsible for ensuring the evaluation takes place, but the contracting officer's representative may be tasked with evaluating contractor performance. See 14 FAH-2 H-572d, "Final Evaluation."

<sup>20</sup> According to 4 FAM 326.1a, suspense deposits abroad transactions are official collection amounts for payments on behalf of and as directed by the depositors. The U.S. government is responsible to each depositor for ensuring amounts received are appropriately disbursed or returned.

**Recommendation 1:** Embassy Phnom Penh should bring its fire protection program into compliance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Phnom Penh)

***Safety, Health, and Environmental Management Program Did Not Fully Comply With Department Standards***

OIG found the embassy's safety, health, and environmental management program did not fully comply with Department standards. Specifically, OIG found the embassy did not:

- Perform the required semi-annual workplace hazard inspections of high-risk work areas, such as the mail handling areas, the medical laboratory, and the warehouse, from 2022 through 2024 (15 FAM 962a).
- Conduct the required workplace safety training of management officials<sup>21</sup> and supervisors to enable them to administer a proper safety, health, and environmental management program. Additionally, Embassy Phnom Penh's Post Occupational Safety and Health Officer did not provide safety and occupational health orientation to employees within 30 days of their arrival (15 FAM 965e, g, and h).

Staff told OIG they were not aware of all workplace hazard inspection and training requirements. Failure to comply with the Department's safety, health, and environmental management standards increases the risk of injury.

**Recommendation 2:** Embassy Phnom Penh should bring its safety, health, and environmental management program into compliance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Phnom Penh)

**General Services**

***Property Management Program Did Not Fully Comply With Department Standards***

OIG determined the embassy's property management program did not fully comply with Department standards. Specifically, OIG found the embassy:

- Maintained excess inactive furniture and appliance pool stock in the warehouse. At the time of this inspection, 26 percent of the furniture and appliance pool's assets, valued just over \$1 million, were stocked in the warehouse. This was higher than the Department target of up to 10 percent for embassies without supply chain or other local conditions that could impact order delivery timelines, outlined in 6 FAH-5 H-514.1d(5).
- Was unable to provide documentation of quarterly unannounced spot checks of expendable and nonexpendable property in 2024 and 2025. According to 14 FAM 411.2-2b(8), the accountable property officer must conduct quarterly, unannounced spot

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<sup>21</sup> According to 15 FAM 965e, the term "management officials" includes DCMs, management counselors and officers, general services officers, and others.

check inventories of personal property to verify the accuracy of property records in ILMS and reconcile any discrepancies.

- Transferred \$436,000 of nonexpendable property from the warehouse to different locations from 2022 to 2024,<sup>22</sup> but did not document the transfers in ILMS using the DS-584 Nonexpendable Property Transaction form, as required by 14 FAM 414.5.

OIG found these issues were caused by insufficient management oversight and employee unfamiliarity with property management control requirements. Failure to account for property in the Department's approved property record system and conduct regular spot checks leaves the embassy vulnerable to theft and can impact the accuracy of property inventories.

**Recommendation 3:** Embassy Phnom Penh should bring its property management program into compliance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Phnom Penh)

## INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

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OIG reviewed Embassy Phnom Penh's information management and information security operations, including unclassified and classified computer operations and non-enterprise networks,<sup>23</sup> telephone and radio programs, mail operations, emergency preparedness, and cybersecurity responsibilities. During this inspection, Diplomatic Technology (DT) unit staff corrected four deficiencies identified by OIG. Specifically, the staff:

- Installed the server room emergency power off switch (12 FAH-10 H-272.8-1(1-3)).
- Updated and tested the IT contingency plan for the unclassified and classified networks (12 FAM 623.7a, 12 FAM 632.3-2c, and 5 FAM 853.4(4)(c)).
- Procured security classification labels for unclassified and classified equipment (12 FAM 632.1-5c and 12 FAH-10 H-262.2-1b).
- Procured non-enterprise network switches to replace the end-of-life devices (5 FAM 862.2).

OIG found the DT unit staff generally followed Department information management and information security standards, with a few exceptions as discussed below.

### ***Non-Enterprise Network Switches Exceeded Their End-of-Life Service Dates***

OIG found some installed non-enterprise network switches had exceeded their end-of-life service dates by more than 10 years in some instances, contrary to guidance in 5 FAM 114.6-2a, 5 FAM 863.1b, and 5 FAM 867(9). Department standards indicate that hardware, software, and network components installed on networks should not compromise local information technology (IT) infrastructure. DT unit staff told OIG they did not monitor hardware lifecycle

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<sup>22</sup> These transfers included approximately \$111,000 in 2022, \$171,000 in 2023, and \$154,000 in 2024.

<sup>23</sup> The Department defines a non-enterprise network as an internet connection from a commercial or government internet service provider on a Department-owned and operated discrete non-sensitive unclassified local area network that is not connected to any other Department system.

service dates despite having a local configuration management protocol.<sup>24</sup> Not following local configuration management protocols prevents the identification of network components requiring upgrades or replacement and jeopardizes network functionality.

**Recommendation 4:** Embassy Phnom Penh should follow the local configuration management protocol to monitor hardware lifecycles in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Phnom Penh)

***Information Systems Security Officers Did Not Perform Duties in Accordance With Department Standards***

Embassy Phnom Penh's information systems security officers (ISSO) did not perform required ISSO duties in accordance with Department standards (12 FAM 642.4-5a and c, and 5 FAM 847c). OIG found the ISSOs did not maintain or review automated information system logs and records monthly. Furthermore, ISSOs did not review monthly audit reports to identify security-related incidents or deploy firewall technology to protect internal networks that are connected to non-Department networks. DT unit staff responsible for performing ISSO duties told OIG that they were not full-time ISSOs and that it was difficult to perform the additional tasks along with their primary responsibilities. Not performing required ISSO duties exposes Department networks to potential unauthorized access and malicious activity.

**Recommendation 5:** Embassy Phnom Penh should carry out all information systems security officer responsibilities in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Phnom Penh)

***Embassy Did Not Manage Non-Enterprise Networks in Accordance With Department Standards***

Embassy Phnom Penh did not manage its non-enterprise networks according to Department standards. Specifically, the embassy:

- Had unapproved hardware on the networks (5 FAM 872.3c).
- Lacked proper firewall configurations (5 FAM 847c).
- Did not monitor logs (12 FAH-10 H-312.5-2).

DT unit staff cited higher priority tasks as the reason for non-compliance. Failing to manage the security of non-enterprise networks increases the risk of compromising system and data integrity, confidentiality, and availability.

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<sup>24</sup> In November 2024, the Department updated FAM references to the "local IT configuration control board" to "local configuration management protocol." For example, see 5 FAM 114.6-2, "Local Configuration Management." At the time of this inspection, the references in 5 FAM 862.1b and 5 FAM 864c, last updated in June 2024 and October 2018, respectively, continued to refer to the "local IT configuration control board."

**Recommendation 6:** Embassy Phnom Penh should manage its non-enterprise networks in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Phnom Penh)

***Embassy Phnom Penh Emergency Radio Program Did Not Follow Department Accountability Standards***

Embassy Phnom Penh's emergency and evacuation radio program did not follow Department accountability standards. Specifically, the embassy did not track and loan radios using the ILMS loanable property module. According to 5 FAH-2 H-736b, staff are required to use the ILMS loanable property module to loan and issue radios to individuals, sections, or agencies. OIG determined the deficiency in the emergency communication radios program occurred due to a lack of oversight. Without effective oversight and accountability, the emergency communication program will not be positioned to help ensure all staff are properly equipped for emergencies.

**Recommendation 7:** Embassy Phnom Penh should use the Integrated Logistics Management System's loanable property module to loan or issue radios to individuals, sections, and agencies in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Phnom Penh)

***Embassy's Records Management Program Did Not Comply With Department Standards***

Embassy Phnom Penh's records management program did not meet Department standards. Specifically, the embassy did not:

- Retire records in accordance with 5 FAM 418.9(5).
- Capture records generated on non-government electronic messaging applications within 20 days as required in 5 FAM 435d(1).
- Upload diplomatic notes it had issued into the State Messaging and Archive Retrieval Toolset (SMART) system<sup>25</sup> as required by 5 FAH-1 H-611e. From January 1 to December 31, 2024, the embassy uploaded just 18 of 940 notes issued into the SMART system.
- Upload incoming diplomatic notes it had received from January 1 to December 2024, into SMART as required by 5 FAH-1 H-611e.

OIG determined that the DT unit chief, also appointed as the embassy's records coordinator, took several measures to create a compliant records management program. These measures included: sending reminder emails to staff about capturing electronic messages as official records, issuing guidance on each employee's records management responsibilities, defining what constitutes a record, providing instructions on how to execute records management requirements, and offering training to staff. However, despite these efforts the embassy remained non-compliant with Department records management standards. The absence of an

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<sup>25</sup> SMART is the Department's cable and record email application. SMART enables users to send and receive organizational authority messages and other messages with long term value using Microsoft Outlook on the Department's Sensitive But Unclassified and classified networks. These messages are stored and searchable in the SMART Archive.

effective records management program increases the risk of losing information and historical records which may impact the embassy's capacity for policy analysis, decision making, and archival research.

**Recommendation 8:** Embassy Phnom Penh should manage its records management program in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Phnom Penh)

## RECOMMENDATIONS

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OIG provided a draft of this report to Department entities for review and comment on the findings and recommendations. OIG issued 8 recommendations to Embassy Phnom Penh. The embassy's complete response can be found in Appendix B.

**Recommendation 1:** Embassy Phnom Penh should bring its fire protection program into compliance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Phnom Penh)

**Management Response:** In its December 18, 2025, response, Embassy Phnom Penh concurred with this recommendation. The embassy noted an estimated completion date of February 2026.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that Embassy Phnom Penh's fire protection program complied with Department standards.

**Recommendation 2:** Embassy Phnom Penh should bring its safety, health, and environmental management program into compliance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Phnom Penh)

**Management Response:** In its December 18, 2025, response, Embassy Phnom Penh concurred with this recommendation. The embassy noted an estimated completion date of February 2026.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that Embassy Phnom Penh's safety, health, and environmental management program complied with Department standards.

**Recommendation 3:** Embassy Phnom Penh should bring its property management program into compliance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Phnom Penh)

**Management Response:** In its December 18, 2025, response, Embassy Phnom Penh concurred with this recommendation. The embassy noted an estimated completion date of May 2026.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that Embassy Phnom Penh's property management program complied with Department standards.

**Recommendation 4:** Embassy Phnom Penh should follow the local configuration management protocol to monitor hardware lifecycles in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Phnom Penh)

**Management Response:** In its December 18, 2025, response, Embassy Phnom Penh concurred with this recommendation. The embassy noted an estimated completion date of April 2026.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that Embassy Phnom Penh followed the local configuration management protocol to monitor hardware lifecycles in accordance with Department standards.

**Recommendation 5:** Embassy Phnom Penh should carry out all information systems security officer responsibilities in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Phnom Penh)

**Management Response:** In its December 18, 2025, response, Embassy Phnom Penh concurred with this recommendation.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that Embassy Phnom Penh carried out all information systems security officer responsibilities in accordance with Department standards.

**Recommendation 6:** Embassy Phnom Penh should manage its non-enterprise networks in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Phnom Penh)

**Management Response:** In its December 18, 2025, response, Embassy Phnom Penh concurred with this recommendation.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that Embassy Phnom Penh managed its non-enterprise networks in accordance with Department standards

**Recommendation 7:** Embassy Phnom Penh should use the Integrated Logistics Management System's loanable property module to loan or issue radios to individuals, sections, and agencies in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Phnom Penh)

**Management Response:** In its December 18, 2025, response, Embassy Phnom Penh concurred with this recommendation. The embassy noted an estimated completion date of April 2026.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that Embassy Phnom Penh used the Integrated Logistics Management System's loanable property module to loan or issue radios to individuals, sections, and agencies in accordance with Department standards.

**Recommendation 8:** Embassy Phnom Penh should manage its records management program in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Phnom Penh)

**Management Response:** In its December 18, 2025, response, Embassy Phnom Penh concurred with this recommendation. The embassy noted an estimated completion date of March 2026.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that Embassy Phnom Penh managed its records management program in accordance with Department standards.

## PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS

Agency/Section/Title	Name	Arrival Date
<b>Chiefs of Mission:</b>		
Ambassador	Vacant	
Deputy Chief of Mission	Bridgette Walker <sup>a</sup>	7/2023
<b>Chiefs of Sections:</b>		
Consular	Benjamin Chiang	07/2023
Economic	Moses An	8/2021
Management	Jason Kalbfleisch <sup>b</sup>	8/2022
Political	Andrew Leyva	12/2022
Public Diplomacy	Katherine Diop	8/2023
Regional Security	Benjamin Hammond	7/2024
<b>Other Agency Representatives:</b>		
Drug Enforcement Administration	Kenny Lee	9/2021
Legal Attaché	Amy Shuman	7/2022
Senior Defense Official/Defense Attaché	LTC Kyle Saltzman	11/2024
USAID	Kerry Pelzman	3/2023
Peace Corps	Kim Mansaray	4/2023
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	Joyce Neal	2/2023

<sup>a</sup> Bridgette Walker became Chargé d’Affaires, ad interim in August 2024.

<sup>b</sup> At the time of this inspection, Jason Kalbfleisch was serving as the acting Deputy Chief of Mission.

**Source:** OIG generated from personnel data provided by Embassy Phnom Penh.

## APPENDIX A: OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

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This inspection was conducted from March 17 to July 22, 2025,<sup>1</sup> in accordance with the Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation, as issued in 2020 by the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency, and the Inspections Handbook, as issued by the Office of Inspector General (OIG) for the Department and the U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM).

### Objectives and Scope

The Office of Inspections provides the Secretary of State, the Chief Executive Officer of USAGM, and Congress with systematic and independent evaluations of the operations of the Department and USAGM. 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, and U.S. interests are 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; and whether instances of fraud, waste, or abuse exist and whether adequate steps for detection, correction, and prevention have been taken.

### Methodology

OIG used a risk-based approach to prepare for this inspection. OIG conducted portions of this inspection remotely and relied on audio- and video-conferencing tools in addition to in-person interviews with Department and other personnel. OIG also reviewed pertinent records; circulated surveys and compiled the results; and discussed the substance of this report and its findings and recommendations with offices, individuals, and organizations affected by this inspection. OIG used professional judgment and analyzed physical, documentary, and testimonial evidence to develop its findings, conclusions, and actionable recommendations.

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<sup>1</sup> The issuance of this report was delayed due to the lapse in appropriations, which began October 1, 2025, and ended November 12, 2025.

## APPENDIX B: MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

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**Embassy of the United States of America**

Phnom Penh, Cambodia

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December 18, 2025

THRU: Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs – Michael George DeSombre, Assistant Secretary

TO: OIG – Lisa Rodely, Acting Assistant Inspector General for Inspections

FROM: Embassy Phnom Penh – Bridgette Walker, Chargé d’Affaires, a.i.

SUBJECT: Response to Draft OIG Report – Inspection of Embassy Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Embassy Phnom Penh reviewed the draft OIG inspection report, and we provide the following comments in response to the recommendations made:

**OIG Recommendation 1:** Embassy Phnom Penh should bring its fire protection program into compliance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Phnom Penh)

**Management Response:** *Embassy Phnom Penh concurs with the recommendation. The Embassy is updating its fire protection program to ensure it is in compliance with Department standards. The expected completion date is February 2026.*

**OIG Recommendation 2:** Embassy Phnom Penh should bring its safety, health, and environmental management program into compliance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Phnom Penh)

**Management Response:** *Embassy Phnom Penh concurs with the recommendation. The Embassy is currently bringing its safety, health, and environmental program into compliance with Department standards. The expected completion date is February 2026.*

**OIG Recommendation 3:** Embassy Phnom Penh should bring its property management program into compliance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Phnom Penh)

**Management Response:** *Embassy Phnom Penh concurs with the recommendation. The Embassy is working to bring its property management program into compliance with Department standards. The expected completion date is May 2026.*

**OIG Recommendation 4:** Embassy Phnom Penh should follow the local configuration management protocol to monitor hardware lifecycles in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Phnom Penh)

**Management Response:** *Embassy Phnom Penh concurs with the recommendation. The Embassy is drafting a plan to follow the local configuration protocol to monitor hardware lifecycles in accordance with Department standards. The expected completion date is April 2026.*

**OIG Recommendation 5:** Embassy Phnom Penh should carry out all information systems security officer responsibilities in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Phnom Penh)

**Management Response:** *Embassy Phnom Penh concurs with the recommendation. The Embassy has addressed previously cited deficiencies and will continue to prioritize ISSO duties to ensure the security and integrity of Department systems. The expected completion is December 2025.*

**OIG Recommendation 6:** Embassy Phnom Penh should manage its non-enterprise networks in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Phnom Penh)

**Management Response:** *Embassy Phnom Penh concurs with the recommendation. The Embassy is actively working with technical experts in Washington, DC, to properly monitor and inventory non-enterprise networks and firewall configurations. The expected completion date is December 2025.*

**OIG Recommendation 7:** Embassy Phnom Penh should use the Integrated Logistics Management System's loanable property module to loan or issue radios to individuals, sections, and agencies in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Phnom Penh)

**Management Response:** *Embassy Phnom Penh concurs with the recommendation. The Embassy developed and is executing a plan to implement the loanable property module of ILMS to monitor and track all radios issued to individuals, sections, and agencies in accordance with Department standards. The expected completion date is April 2026.*

**OIG Recommendation 8:** Embassy Phnom Penh should manage its records management program in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Phnom Penh)

**Management Response:** *Embassy Phnom Penh concurs with the recommendation. The Embassy is currently updating processes and records in accordance with Department records management program standards. The expected completion date is March 2026.*

The point of contact for this memorandum is Management Counselor Robyn Ames.

## ABBREVIATIONS

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C.F.R.	Code of Federal Regulations
DCM	Deputy Chief of Mission
DT	Diplomatic Technology
FAH	Foreign Affairs Handbook
FAM	Foreign Affairs Manual
FAST	First- and Second-Tour
ILMS	Integrated Logistics Management System
ISSO	Information Systems Security Officers
LE	Locally Employed
MENTOR	Motivating Excellence through Networking Training and Outstanding Resources
SMART	State Messaging and Archive Retrieval Toolset

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