



# Office of Inspector General

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**To:** Carrie Hessler-Radelet, Director  
Daljit Bains, Chief Compliance Officer

**From:** Kathy A. Buller, Inspector General *Kathy A. Buller*

**Date:** March 12, 2015

**Subject:** Final Report on the Follow-up Audit of the Peace Corps' Safety and Security Program (IG-15-03-A)

Transmitted for your information is our final report on the Follow-up Audit of the Peace Corps' Safety and Security Program.

Management concurred with all seven recommendations. All recommendations remain open pending confirmation from the chief compliance officer that the documentation identified in management's response has been received. In its response, management described actions it is taking or intends to take to address the issues that prompted each of our recommendations. We wish to note that in closing recommendations, we are not certifying that the agency has taken these actions or that we have reviewed their effect. Certifying compliance and verifying effectiveness are management's responsibilities.

Our comments, which are in the report as Appendix E, address these matters. Please respond with documentation to close the remaining open recommendation within 90 days of receipt of this memorandum.

You may address questions regarding follow-up or documentation to Assistant Inspector General for Audit Judy Leonhardt at 202.692.2914.

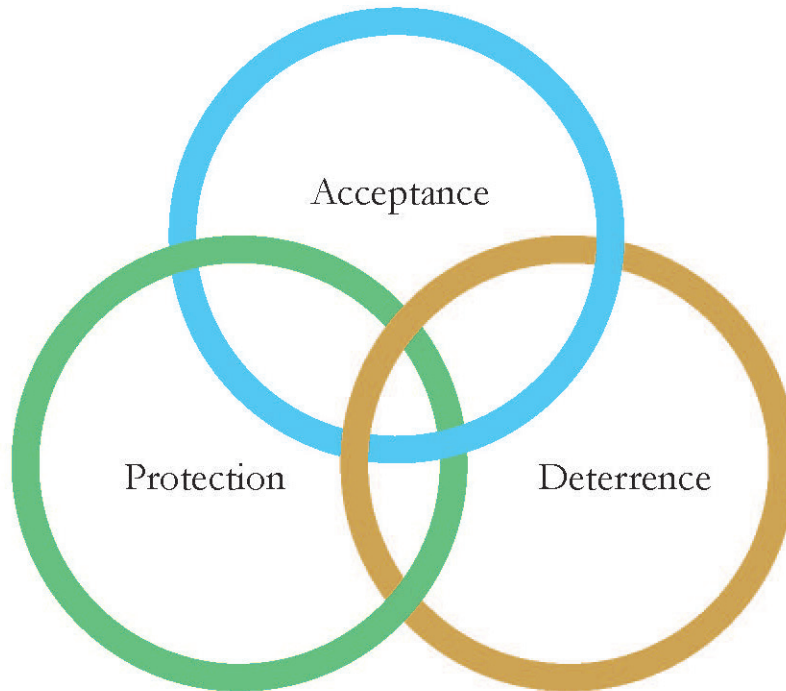
Please accept our thanks for your cooperation and assistance in our review.

cc: Laura Chambers, Chief of Staff  
Jacklyn Dinneen, White House Liaison  
Rudy Mehrbani, General Counsel  
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# Peace Corps Office of Inspector General

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**Final Audit Report:  
Follow-Up Audit of the Peace Corps' Volunteer  
Safety and Security Program  
IG-15-03-A**

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**March 2015**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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### BACKGROUND

The Peace Corps manages its safety and security responsibilities through two offices: the Office of Safety and Security (OSS) and the Office of Global Operations (OGO). OSS is responsible for oversight of the safety and security programs for Peace Corps Volunteers, trainees (V/Ts), and staff both in the U.S. and overseas. OGO is responsible for ensuring these programs are effectively implemented at each post. In addition, OSS provides technical oversight of the safety and security positions assigned to posts, which fall under the purview of OGO.

In April 2010, we issued IG-10-08-A [Final Audit Report: Peace Corps Volunteer Safety and Security Program](#). Our review found that without a clear management structure, no headquarters office accepted complete ownership of the safety and security program, and the agency's security program lacked essential elements. This report contained 28 recommendations, all of which we closed based on the agency's corrective actions.

### OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this follow-up audit were to determine and assess whether:

- The memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the Peace Corps and the Department of State, Bureau of Diplomatic Security Office (DOS/DS) was disseminated and communicated to safety and security personnel.
- Peace Corps safety and security officer recommendations are effectively tracked, monitored, and implemented.
- The qualifications and trainings of safety and security officers and safety and security managers are consistent with their roles and responsibilities (see Appendix A for more information on the audit objectives, scope, and methodology).

### RESULTS IN BRIEF

Since 2010, the Peace Corps' safety and security program has evolved significantly and the agency has made substantial progress to address its safety and security needs. The agency has established more vigorous roles and responsibilities for the safety and security manager (SSM) position. Additionally, the agency has taken steps to address all of the 2010 audit report recommendations, such as updating guidance materials and developing a consistent evaluation process for security personnel. However, the overseas safety and security program still needs improvement. Specifically:

- The agency has never met its safety and security performance indicator.
- Peace Corps safety and security officer (PCSSO) trip reports and criticality meetings have not been timely.
- The outlined MOU communication requirements with regional security officers (RSOs) have not always been met.
- Trainings provided to SSMs did not cover some of the responsibilities outlined in their statement of work (SOW).

- Posts did not consistently follow the template for the SOW for the SSM position.

By making improvements to these aspects of the program, OSS can operate more efficiently and better ensure Volunteer safety.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Our report contains seven recommendations, which, if implemented, should strengthen the agency's Volunteer safety and security program.

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## BACKGROUND AND AUDIT OBJECTIVES

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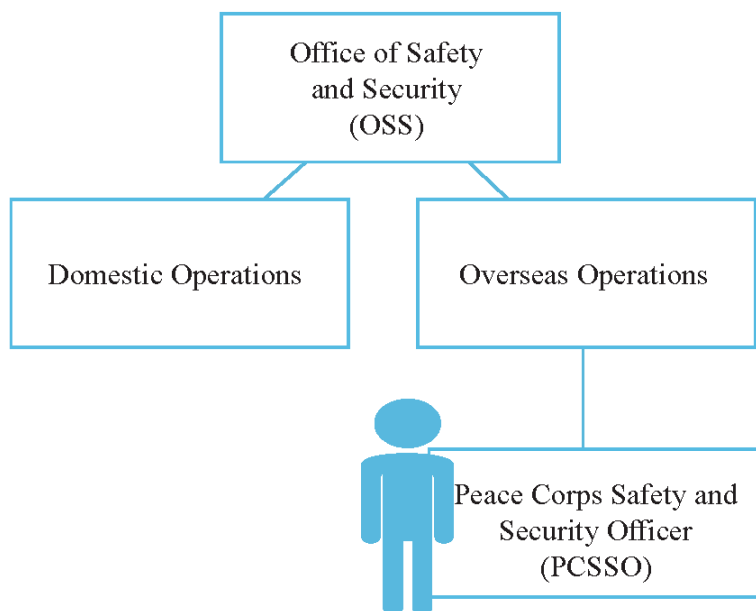
The Peace Corps manages its safety and security responsibilities through two offices: OSS and OGO. OSS is responsible for oversight of the safety and security programs for Peace Corps V/Ts and staff both in the U.S. and overseas. OGO is responsible for ensuring these programs are effectively implemented at each post. Additionally, OSS provides technical oversight of the safety and security positions assigned to posts, which fall under the purview of OGO.

### The Office of Safety and Security

OSS is responsible for oversight of the safety and security programs for Peace Corps Volunteers, trainees, and staff, both in the U.S. and overseas. OSS directs and oversees all security programs for the agency with the exception of information technology security. OSS is divided into two operational units, one for domestic security and one for overseas. The chief of overseas operations leads the overseas operations unit. The unit coordinates with OGO and the three Peace Corps regions to implement solutions to V/T safety and security problems; develops and updates agency V/T and overseas staff safety and security procedures and guidelines; and provides technical guidance and assistance to the regions and the posts. Furthermore, the overseas operations unit manages the incident reporting process, compiles and analyzes crime data, makes recommendations for security improvements, as well as acts as the liaison with other agencies and organizations in security-related matters.

The overseas operation group also manages the activities of PCSSOs. PCSSOs are assigned to sub-regions throughout the world and provide support to posts in all areas of safety and security. Each PCSSO is responsible for assisting their assigned posts to implement safety and security programs.

**Figure 1. OSS Organization Chart**



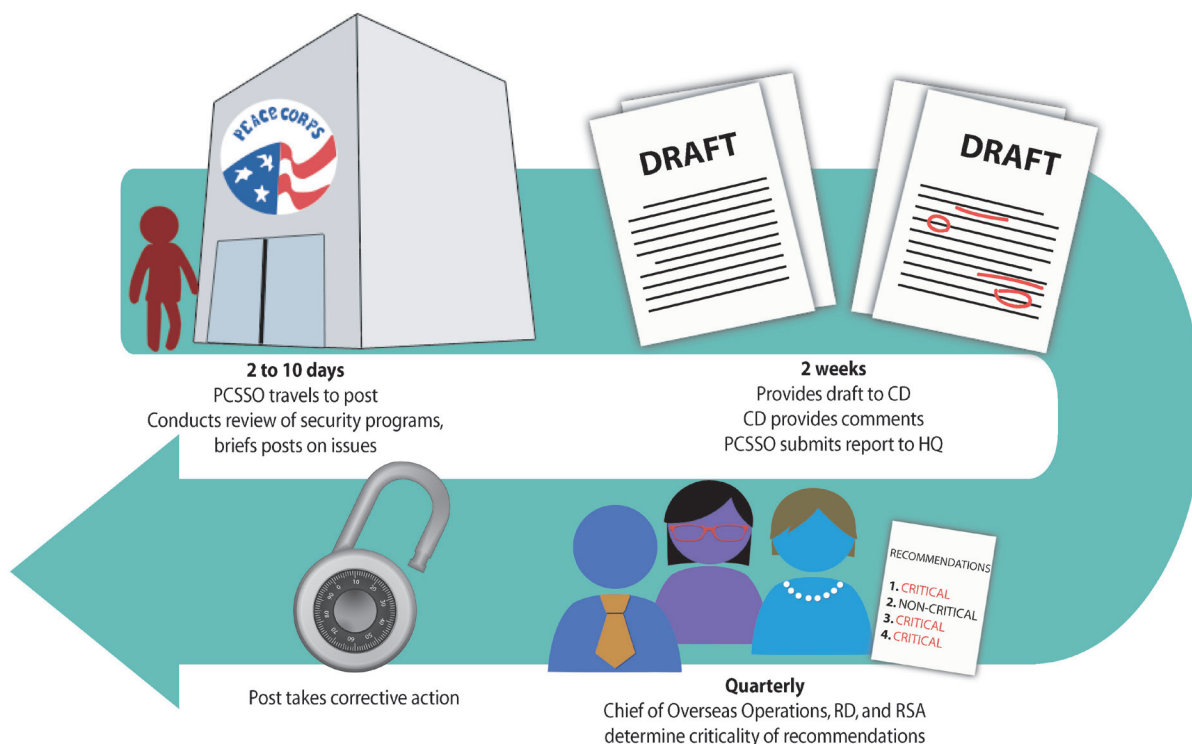
## PCSSO Reports

PCSSOs travel to posts to conduct reviews of posts' safety and security programs and make recommendations for improvements, as needed. All the PCSSOs then follow-up during their next visit to ensure that the post implemented the recommendations. The findings and recommendations from these visits are captured in PCSSO trip reports.

According to PCSSOs' performance standards, PCSSOs are supposed to visit each of their posts at least once a year and ensure that each post receives a comprehensive safety and security assessment every three years. These visits typically last between five and 11 days. At the end of the visit, the PCSSO briefs the country director (CD) on the safety and security issues and proposed recommendations. After leaving post, the PCSSO drafts a formal report and provides it to the CD for review. The CD then has a week to provide comment or clarification before the PCSSO submits the final report to OSS.

Once the report has been submitted to OSS, there is a meeting between the chief of overseas operations and the respective regional director and regional security advisor (RSA) to discuss the PCSSO report and associated recommendations. This meeting is called the "criticality meeting" because at the meeting, it is determined which of the report recommendations are considered "critical." A critical recommendation is a recommendation based on law, policy, and procedures or that has an immediate impact on volunteer safety. Criticality determinations are then communicated to the post and the critical recommendations are prioritized for corrective action implementation.

**Figure 2. PCSSO Report Process**



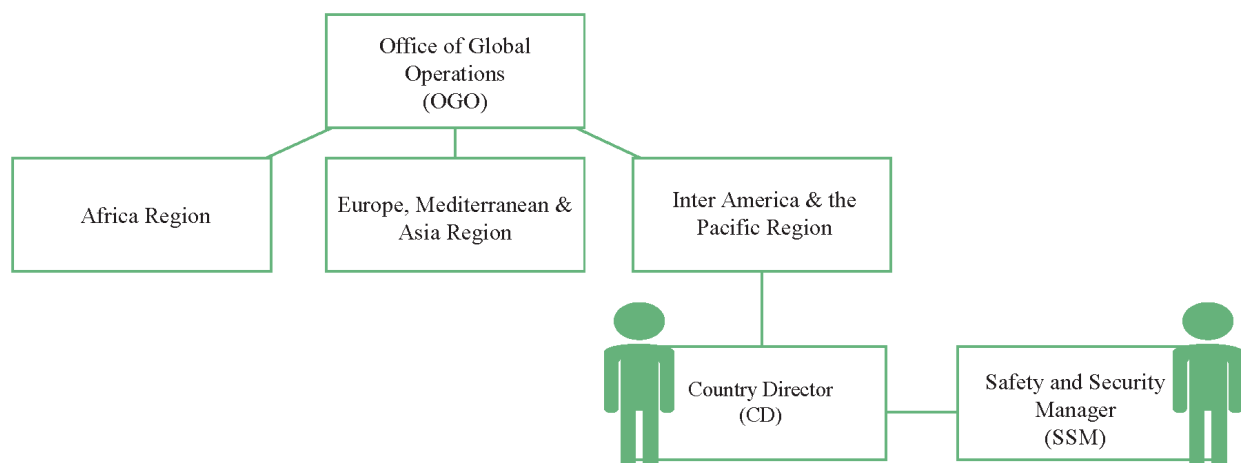
## The Office of Global Operations

OGO is responsible for oversight and coordination of support and management of Peace Corps overseas operations. OGO includes many sub-offices, including the three regional offices that direct the management and support for country-level operations and ensure that resources are available for Volunteers to serve effectively. However, OSS provides technical oversight of the safety and security positions at posts, which fall under OGO, by developing the scope of work for the positions, establishing performance standards and professional development programs for the positions, assisting in the selection of applicants for the positions, and by providing technical guidance and assistance to each region and post.

Within each regional office, there is an RSA who reports to the head of the region and serves as a security advisor. The RSA is responsible for coordinating the region's safety and security activities and serving as the liaison between region, posts, PCSSOs, and the chief of overseas operations. The RSA coordinates with key players on a broad range of security concerns and assists posts with the implementation of their Volunteer safety and security support systems. OSS provides technical oversight of the work performed by the RSAs. The RSA is also responsible for resolving any issues in relation to the implementation of PCSSO recommendations and tracking the status and completion of these recommendations.

At post, there is an SSM<sup>1</sup> who reports directly to the CD and is responsible for the overall coordination of the post's Volunteer safety and security support system. The SSM must collaborate closely with other staff to ensure that all required components of the Volunteer safety and security support system are operational and are being properly executed. The SSM position carries a SOW that defines the required qualifications and the responsibilities of the position. OSS, through Overseas Operations and the relevant PCSSO, provides technical oversight over the work performed by the SSM.

**Figure 3. OGO Organizational Chart**



<sup>1</sup> In February 2014, the title for the safety and security coordinator position was changed to safety and security manager.



### **Embassy Support**

In all countries with an American diplomatic presence, DOS/DS has a RSO who works at the U.S. Embassy and is responsible for protecting U.S. personnel, their families, and facilities. The RSO serves as the advisor to the U.S. ambassador on all security-related matters. The CD is responsible for maintaining regular contact the RSO on security concerns and informing the RSO of crimes involving V/Ts.

In response to the requirement in the Kate Puzey Volunteer Protection Act of 2011 (Kate Puzey Act) and a recommendation from the 2010 Office of Inspector General (OIG) audit on safety and security, the Peace Corps Deputy Director and DOS/DS signed an MOU on May 11, 2012. While historically DOS/DS provided the Peace Corps with support when requested, the intent of the MOU was to formalize the relationship, further define areas of organizational level responsibility and cooperation, and clarify individual roles and responsibilities for overseas safety and security regarding Peace Corps staff and Volunteers. The MOU addressed five issues: physical, technical, and procedural security; crimes and other incidents involving Volunteers; personnel security investigations; training services; and funding and reimbursement.

### **Immediate Notification**

According to the MOU, “The Peace Corps Country Director will notify the RSO by email of all crimes against Peace Corps Volunteers through the Peace Corps Consolidated Incident Reporting System (CIRS). For serious crimes or incidents...the Peace Corps Country Director must immediately notify the RSO.” The MOU defines serious crimes or incidents as: a missing Volunteer, the death of a Volunteer, a life-threatening injury to a Volunteer resulting from a crime, the rape or attempted rape or sexual assault of a Volunteer, the kidnapping or hostage taking of a Volunteer, any other serious crime or security incident involving a Volunteer, or any crime or attack that is potentially motivated by politics, terrorism, or a hate crime.

### **Previous OIG Audit Report**

In April 2010, we issued IG-10-08-A, [Final Audit Report: Peace Corps Volunteer Safety and Security Program](#). Our review found that without a clear management structure, no headquarters office accepted complete ownership of the Volunteer safety and security program, and the agency’s security program lacked essential elements. As a result, Volunteer safety and security was at risk because the agency did not ensure that posts fully implemented required safety and security policies. Furthermore, the agency had not formalized its relationship regarding safety and security responsibilities with the Department of State. This report contained 28 recommendations, all of which we closed based on the agency’s corrective actions.

## **Audit Objectives**

The objectives of this follow-up audit were to determine and assess whether:

- The MOU between the Peace Corps and DOS/DS was disseminated and communicated to safety and security personnel.
- Peace Corps safety and security officer recommendations are effectively tracked, monitored, and implemented.
- The qualifications and trainings of safety and security officers and safety and security managers are consistent with their roles and responsibilities (see Appendix A for more information on the audit objectives, scope, and methodology).

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## AUDIT RESULTS

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Since 2010, the Peace Corps' safety and security program has evolved significantly and the agency has made substantial progress to address its safety and security needs. The agency has established more vigorous roles and responsibilities for the SSM position. Additionally, the agency has taken steps to address all of the 2010 audit report recommendations, such as updating guidance materials and developing a consistent evaluation process for security personnel. However, the overseas safety and security program still needs improvement. Specifically:

- The agency has never met its safety and security performance indicator.
- PCSSO trip reports and criticality meetings have not been timely.
- The outlined MOU communication requirements with RSOs have not always been met.
- Trainings provided to SSMs did not cover some of the responsibilities outlined in their SOW.
- Posts did not consistently follow the template for the SOW for the SSM position.

By making improvements to these aspects of the program, OSS can operate more efficiently and better ensure Volunteer safety.

### ***SAFETY AND SECURITY PERFORMANCE MEASURES NOT MET***

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The Peace Corps has consistently failed to meet the agency's safety and security performance indicator. This performance goal has never been met because there is no clear definition of success and the indicator used is not meaningful to the offices involved. Without meaningful performance goals, it is hard to measure success and hold individuals accountable for achieving that success. Furthermore, the agency is unable to measure trends over time and make substantial improvements to the safety and security program.

**Performance Goals.** According to 31 U.S. Code Section 1116, each federal agency is required to provide the public and OMB an annual update on agency performance. Specifically the law states, "Each update shall compare actual performance achieved with the performance goals established in the agency performance plan." This update, under the Reports Consolidation Act of 2000, is now referred to as the annual Performance and Accountability Report (PAR).

From 2009 to present, the Peace Corps' biennial performance plans have included the performance goal, "enhance the safety and security of Volunteers." From 2009–11, one of the indicators identified to measure this goal was the "percentage of posts that implement critical recommendations focused on Volunteer/Trainee safety and security on a timely basis." The chief of overseas operations has defined "critical" as recommendations based on law, policy, and procedures or having an immediate impact on Volunteer safety. In 2012, the indicator was changed to "the percentage of all critical Volunteer safety and security recommendations made by the Peace Corps safety and security officers implemented by posts by the agreed upon time."

**Goals Never Met.** The Peace Corps has consistently failed to meet the safety and security PAR indicator. In 2012, OSS lowered the target goal from 100 percent to 85 percent, but was still unable to meet the goal. The table below shows agency results over the past six years.

**Table 1.**

	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14
<b>Target</b>	100%	100%	100%	85%	88%	88%
<b>Result</b>	84%	56%	79%	75%	84%	67%

Source: Annual PARs

**Goal Not Meaningful and Clear.** Our audit work indicates that this performance goal has not been met because there is no clear definition on success. The rationale for this indicator, as stated in the PAR, is that PCSSOs’ recommendations are based on their annual reviews of posts’ safety and security systems. Therefore, the timely implementation of recommendations is critical for Volunteer safety.

Numerous changes to the indicator have weakened the agency’s ability to track it. First, the unit measured changed from “posts” to “recommendations” in 2012, making it difficult to measure change over time. Furthermore, in FY 2011 the Peace Corps reported that it had found methodological errors in the calculation of the indicator in FYs 2009 and 2010. Specifically, in FY 2009 the agency reported the percentage of critical recommendations implemented instead of the percentage of posts that had implemented all the critical recommendations. In FY 2010, the agency reported the percentage of posts that had implemented all recommendations, not just the critical ones that were due in FY 2010. The ambiguity continued when the indicator was changed to the percentage of all critical recommendations implemented in FY 2012.

Our discussions with RSAs indicated that the metric is being measured inconsistently, making progress tracking almost impossible. One RSA, who was in charge of preparing the PAR metric, reported using the last three years of recommendations, reasoning that to go back further would be meaningless. Another RSA stated that the metric is calculated using the estimated closure date, counting recommendations for that year and one additional year after the estimated completion date. Inconsistent reporting of indicator results dilutes the accuracy of indicator statistics.

Further, the RSAs, who are in charge of tracking the recommendations, reported that the PAR metric is not a useful and valuable measurement. One RSA told us that, while it is nice to have something with teeth and a reason to compel posts to implement changes, the PAR metric is not a useful tool. Another RSA told us that, while the indicator captures last year’s performance, it does not explain that performance. The third RSA informed us that CDs feel that tracking the number of critical recommendations is a waste of time since the environment at posts changes rapidly and a recommendation can quickly become obsolete.

In addition to the RSAs, OSS also finds the PAR metric problematic, particularly the indicator’s emphasis on ‘critical.’ According to the chief of overseas operations, “I hate this notion that we decide which recommendation is critical....We are trying to get away of such ‘criticality’ characterization.” PCSSOs argue that meetings to determine criticality are unnecessary and feel that all their recommendations should be treated as critical. One PCSSO stated, “To me they all

need to be done, or I wouldn't recommend them. We try not to recommend something because of personal whim. I would like [posts] to get to all the points....PCSSOs only make recommendations if they are critical. [I] don't understand why another level is necessary.”

Our audit results indicate that, because the indicator has no real meaning to anyone in OSS, it is not being used to measure progress as it relates to the implementation of recommendations. Two of the RSAs stated that they primarily collect information about this indicator at the end of the year when the PAR is being completed and that performance to meet this goal is often not tracked throughout the year. Until another indicator is developed, one that stakeholders feel is both relevant and consequential, the agency will be unable to measure trends over time and make substantial improvements to the safety and security program.

**We recommend:**

- 1. That the Office of Safety and Security replace the performance and accountability metric with one that is better suited to measure the agency's performance goal. The goal needs to be clearly stated, with consistent application of its measurement.**

***PCSSO TRIP REPORTS AND CRITICALITY MEETINGS NOT TIMELY***

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PCSSO trip reports and criticality meetings have not been timely because OSS has not established timeliness requirements for these processes. Long delays between criticality meetings and issuing PCSSO reports could have serious repercussions for Volunteer safety.

**Processes Not Timely.** While there is an expectation that PCSSO trip reports be issued within two weeks of the trip, these reports have not been issued in a timely manner. We selected 12 posts and reviewed the timeliness of all trip reports issued for those posts in the last five years.<sup>2</sup> Within the Africa region, the average number of days that elapsed between the last day of the trip and the date the report was published was 39 days, more than double the two-week timeline. Similarly, the Inter-American and the Pacific region's average turnaround were 29 days. Only the Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia region, with an average turnaround time of five days, was consistently producing reports in a timely manner.

In addition, the criticality meetings are not regularly held. According to the RSAs, the criticality meetings should occur quarterly, with one meeting for each region. However, OIG analyzed the dates the PCSSOs final report were issued to the date of the associated criticality meeting for the selected posts in the Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia region and the Africa region and determined that approximately 45 percent of meetings occurred over 180 days after the report

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<sup>2</sup> For more information the sample selection process, see Appendix A: Objective, Scope, and Methodology.

was issued.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, during the course of the audit work we identified that no criticality meetings were held between April 2013 and February 2014, a 10 month time span. Thanks to the efforts of the headquarters PCSSO who was hired in late 2013, criticality meetings were held regularly in 2014. In addition to the February 2014 meetings, all three regions had criticality meetings in May, July and October.

**No Timeliness Requirements.** PCSSO trip reports and criticality meetings are not occurring timely because OSS has not formally established any timeliness requirements for these items. Furthermore, there is no system in place to determine the length of time elapsed between the different steps of the oversight program. Specifically, there is no centralized information on PCSSO trips, related recommendations, and associated milestones in the process.

While there is no centralized information on the timeliness of the process, each RSA maintains an Excel spreadsheet to track the PCSSO recommendations, criticality determinations, and status of the recommendations. However, not all PCSSOs reported having access to their RSA's spreadsheet. Three PCSSOs stated they had access to the tracking system, two said they have never seen the tracking sheet but could probably find it, and three PCSSOs said they did not have access to their RSA's spreadsheet.

**Program is Not Efficient.** Without clearly defined timeliness metrics and goals, the overseas Volunteer safety and security program is not efficient and there is decreased accountability among the staff involved. The effectiveness of the program is driven by individual personalities, their sense of responsibility, and the relationships they have with other staff members. Long delays between criticality meetings and issuing PCSSO reports could have serious repercussions for Volunteer safety. Since posts typically do not begin to respond to PCSSO recommendations until criticality has been determined, long delays in holding criticality meetings further delay implementation of critical recommendations. Additionally, 57 percent of PCSSOs reported that they are not informed about criticality determinations.

Furthermore, without a centralized, transparent tracking system for PCSSO trip reports and related recommendations, there has been an unnecessary duplication of work on the part of the RSAs and PCSSOs. Outside of the existing three RSA spreadsheets, five PCSSOs reported that they maintain their own spreadsheets to track their recommendations. According to the GAO's report on Opportunities to Reduce Potential Duplication in Government Programs, Save Tax Dollars, and Enhance Revenue, "Reducing or eliminating duplication, overlap, or fragmentation could potentially save billions of tax dollars annually and help agencies provide more efficient and effective services." By creating a centralized system, the Peace Corps could reduce the burden of tracking PCSSO recommendations and provide a centralized system that would allow accountability, timeliness, and trend analysis across regions possible.

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<sup>3</sup> The RSA for the Inter-American and the Pacific region was unable to produce the dates of criticality meetings for past PCSSO reports due to a past computer malfunction and resulting data loss.

**We recommend:**

- 2. That the Office of Safety and Security develop timeliness requirements for issuing Peace Corps safety and security officer reports and holding criticality meetings.**
- 3. That the Office of Safety and Security develop a process to monitor and ensure successful completion of the timeless requirements for Peace Corps safety and security officer reports and criticality meeting.**
- 4. That the Office of Safety and Security create a centrally located, shared database of information related to Peace Corps safety and security officer reports, recommendations, and any actions post take to resolve the recommendations.**

***MOU COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENTS NOT FOLLOWED***

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The Peace Corps has not consistently followed its outlined communication requirements in the MOU. Peace Corps communications to RSOs have been inconsistent because the roles and responsibilities have not been clearly defined. Without clear and consistent communications, the relationship between the overseas safety and security staff and the RSOs could be damaged and Volunteer safety could be put at risk.

**Inconsistent Implementation of the MOU.** The Peace Corps has not consistently followed its outlined communication requirements in the MOU. Specifically, we found that PCSSOs' security inspections reports were not consistently reported to the RSO. While some PCSSOs shared their reports, others stated that they rely on the CD to share the results of their inspections with the RSO. The MOU states that PCSSOs "will conduct periodic security inspections of Peace Corps facilities and residences under COM [chief of mission] authority and share inspection results with the RSO." According the OSS PCSSO Trip Report standard operating procedure, posts should receive a full security inspection, at a minimum, every three years. We surveyed 11 RSOs responsible for the security at the sampled posts and only four (36 percent) reported receiving results of PCSSO inspections.<sup>4</sup>

Furthermore, almost half of serious incidents we analyzed were not reported to RSOs in a timely manner. The MOU requires CDs to notify RSOs of serious incidents involving Volunteers "immediately." However, the MOU does not define what constitutes "immediately." For the purposes of our analysis, we chose to interpret "immediately" to mean within one calendar day

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<sup>4</sup> The survey was sent to 12 RSOs, however one never responded.

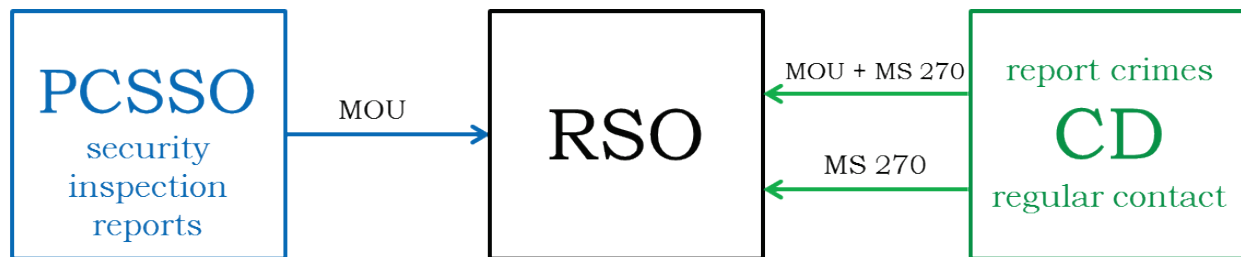
of when the incident is reported to the post.<sup>5</sup> We selected one to three serious incidents from each post (25 total) that were filed through CIRS during the 2013 calendar year from each of the 12 posts in our sample.<sup>6</sup>

We then asked CDs and RSOs if and how the RSO was notified about each incident. Our analysis showed that all RSOs were made aware of the serious incidents that occurred in their respective posts through various methods for communication. When serious incidents that were more likely to require immediate RSO assistance (for example, kidnappings or the death of a Volunteer) occurred, CDs usually called the RSO to report the incident.

Of the 25 incidents we selected, 16 (64 percent) were reported to RSOs only using CIRS.<sup>7</sup> Of those 16 incidents, 10 (63 percent) were sent two or more days after the incident was reported to the post. One of the CIRS reports was sent to the RSO 10 days after the serious incident was reported to post.

**No Clear Roles and Responsibilities.** There is no consistent communication structure between Peace Corps and the RSO. The Peace Corps Manual, section (MS) 270, “Volunteer/Trainee Safety and Security” states that CDs are responsible for maintaining regular contact with the RSO; however, the MOU states that PCSSOs should conduct inspections and report the results to the RSOs. See Figure 4 for a depiction of the communication requirements.

**Figure 4. Communication Paths**



Furthermore, while the MOU requires CDs to report serious crimes immediately to RSOs, there is no Peace Corps guidance to clarify how to meet this responsibility.<sup>8</sup> MS 270 states that the CD must keep the RSO informed of crimes involving V/Ts. However, there is no guidance on how the CD should handle reporting serious incidents, for example how to contact the RSO (such as

<sup>5</sup> We made this determination to take into consideration that the CD’s first priority was to ensure that the immediate needs of the affected Volunteer(s) are addressed.

<sup>6</sup> To ensure that we covered all types of “serious crimes or incidents” described in the MOU, we selected one incident concerning the death of a Volunteer that occurred in 2011.

<sup>7</sup> When an incident is reported through CIRS, RSOs receive an automated email detailing the event.

<sup>8</sup> In 2012, OIG addressed the need for clear communication with RSOs on the MOU requirements. In IG-12-08-E, [Final Report: Review of the Peace Corps’ Implementation of Guidelines Related to Volunteer Victims of Rape and Sexual Assault](#) (September, 2012), we recommended that CDs and RSOs meet to review the support services that may be provided under the Peace Corps-DOS/DS MOU in an initial meeting and when new CDs or RSOs arrive at the post. This recommendation remains open.



by phone or via CIRS), what the timeframe for reporting needs to be, and how the CD should record and document the successful communication.

The lack of information and communication between the Peace Corps and the RSOs could put Volunteer safety at risk and damage the relationship between the Peace Corps and the RSO. RSOs track crimes against Americans within the host country to evaluate the security environment. It is important that they be informed of all serious incidents to make determinations about the safety of Americans in certain areas of the country. While CIRS is one method of communication, its use has not always been timely and does not draw attention to the critical nature of serious incidents and therefore should not be the only relied upon method of communication.

**Relationship Damaged.** The relationship between the Peace Corps and RSOs was damaged when the Peace Corps failed to communicate the agency's change in the reporting of crime incidents against Volunteers to RSOs. Previously, RSOs would receive emails from CIRS with full incident reports, which provide information on the victim's identity, location of the incident, and details of the crime. However, on September 1, 2013, in response to the Kate Puzey Act, the Peace Corps introduced a system of standard and restricted reporting of sexual assault incidents. Restricted reporting allows a Volunteer who is the victim of sexual assault to confidentially disclose the details of his or her assault to specified individuals and receive services without the dissemination of his or her personally identifiable information and without triggering an official investigation. "Whereas a standard report contains the full details of the sexual assault incident and provides the Volunteer with an opportunity to initiate an official investigation." The change in reporting system resulted in RSOs receiving abridged reports for *all crime incidents*, including those not classified as sexual assaults. Additionally, the restricted sexual assaults were completely excluded from the reports without explanation.<sup>9</sup>

The chief of overseas operations reported the agency had adequately explained the change in reporting incidents to DOS/DS leadership. However, the Peace Corps did not submit a preliminary draft cable to DOS/DS to explain the change to all RSOs until November 21, 2013—almost three months after the reporting change occurred. The cable, further delayed by DOS/DS, was not sent until March 18, 2014. In the cable the Peace Corps agreed to, once again, provide RSOs with full incident reports except those categorized as restricted reports of sexual assaults.

It took over six months for RSOs to receive any official explanation from the Peace Corps about the change in CIRS reports. Without clear communication, the agency left it up to the PCSSOs and posts to explain the change in reporting. This lack of communication created tension between RSOs and the Peace Corps posts and damaged some of the established relationships. One PCSSO explained that communicating the change to restricted reporting was critical and the failure to do so damaged the Peace Corps' reputation with the RSOs. Another PCSSO told us, "Every RSO is angry and feels like he/she doesn't have enough information to do their job." Five out of the 11 RSOs we surveyed echoed the PCSSOs' statements. One RSO stated that "since the transition to restricted reporting in 2013, which is currently applied to all reported incidents in

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<sup>9</sup> Initially all reports made by Volunteers who are the victims of sexual assault remain restricted unless and until such victim has made an affirmative choice to convert the report to a standard report.

CIRS, it has become increasingly difficult for RSO[s] to maintain situational awareness of crimes against Peace Corps Volunteers in [post].” While the CD does not receive restricted reports, they are notified that an incident occurred in country and receive some limited non-personally identifiable information about the incident. Such information includes the type of assault (rape, aggravated sexual assault or sexual assault) and the category of the location of the sexual assault (e.g., residence, local establishment, public transportation).

**We recommend:**

- 5. That the Office of Safety and Security develop and document clear roles and responsibilities related to communication with regional security officers including timeliness and methodology requirements of reporting serious incidents.**
- 6. That the Office of Safety and Security, in conjunction with the Office of General Counsel, determine whether, similar to country directors, the regional security officers should be notified of rape and sexual assault incidents involving Volunteers and provided with the same non-personally identifying information about the incident, and that the agency revise its policies accordingly.**

***SSM TRAINING DID NOT COVER ALL RESPONSIBILITIES***

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While there has been great improvement in the frequency and content of the training that SSMs receive, the trainings provided did not cover all responsibilities included on the SOW for the SSM position because the agency does not have a process to ensure that the training provided meets the needs of SSMs. We previously reported that the training of overseas staff at the Peace Corps is inconsistent and varies greatly depending on one’s position and post (see IG-14-07-E, [Final Program Evaluation Report: Training Peace Corps’ Overseas Staff](#) (September 2014)). Without proper training for SSMs, Volunteer security is at risk, as SSMs are the first line of defense in their assigned countries.

**Training Requirements.** The Peace Corps should provide training to help employees maintain and improve the competence for their jobs. When the safety and security coordinator position was renamed safety and security manager, the change was intended to reflect the considerable increase in the position’s scope and responsibilities. The SSM position’s current SOW defines a wide variety of required responsibilities, such as:

- Conducting annual crime trends analysis, sharing results with staff and Volunteers as appropriate and coordinating modifications of safety and security program based on findings.

- Ensuring global positioning system (GPS) coordinates are maintained for Volunteer sites, consolidation points and other key location in accordance with agency procedures.
- Serving as the main technical advisor to senior staff at post during an emergency.
- Managing the security and non-medical follow-up for Volunteer incidents of sexual assault.

According to 5 C.F.R. 410.201(4), “agencies are required to periodically assess (at minimum annually) the overall agency talent management program to identify training needs.” OPM states that training needs assessment will identify the “gaps” between performance required and current performance, allowing the trainer to identify what training is needed. To develop a good training program, OSS should assess the needs of all SSMs and consider SSMs’ differing backgrounds and experiences. This is particularly true considering how the position has changed over the past several years. According to one PCSSO, “[We] may have selected different people if we knew what the job was going to grow into.” Since these previous hires might not have all of the expertise that the enhanced SSM position requires, it is critical to have a strong training program to ensure that these staff members are equipped to meet their increased roles and responsibilities.

In addition, there is often a steep learning curve for new SSMs. Several PCSSOs and CDs described the challenge hiring local staff that possess all the necessary qualifications. Furthermore, as one PCSSO reported, the salary is often not sufficient to attract highly qualified candidates. PCSSOs often prioritize hiring SSMs with the qualifications and experiences that they feel cannot be taught, with the expectation that the new hires will receive the necessary training to fill the gap.

Many aspects of the SSM position require knowledge of different types of technology. While familiarity with technology, such as GPS, is not a requirement for hire, it is critical that Peace Corps ensures that all SSMs are working with the same knowledge base and are trained on any changes, including new developments and upgrades in that technology. Furthermore, SSMs have a need for continuing training, as technology used in the field changes and the roles and responsibilities of the SSMs has increased over the last few years.

**Training Received.** While OSS normally conducts comprehensive SSM training every other year, the Kate Puzey Act created extensive changes to the security requirements, which led to an increased role of SSMs. In order to ensure that SSMs are prepared to fulfill their additional requirements, SSMs have received training every year since 2010, covering areas such as restricted reporting and sexual assault prevention. OIG conducted a survey of 12 SSMs, four employees from each of the three regions, on the training they have received and if more training was needed for them to fulfill their defined roles and responsibilities. All SSMs reported that the training they received has been both adequate and relevant to their responsibilities. One new SSM described a recent training on sexual assault as invaluable:

Not only did it provide me much needed practice and information regarding very large changes to Peace Corps’ approach to responding to sexual assault, but it also provided a much needed opportunity for me to sit down and talk to my fellow [SSMs], the PCSSOs and the RSA about the role of the [SSM] in [the] Peace Corps.

Despite SSMs general satisfaction with their trainings, we found that the trainings provided to SSMs over the last three years did not cover all responsibilities included on the SOW for the SSM position, focusing instead on the new agency initiatives. In our survey of 12 SSMs, eight told us that they had not obtained official training to fulfill one or more elements of their responsibilities. Specifically, the result of our surveys indicated that:

- Five (42 percent) SSMs lacked training on GPS equipment.
- Six (50 percent) SSMs lacked training on testing security equipment such as satellite phone and radios.

**No Formalized Needs Assessment.** SSMs did not receive all training needed because there is no process in place to ensure that the training provided meets the needs of the SSMs. The chief of overseas operations acknowledged that SSMs might need training in different areas to understand other aspects of their responsibilities since the recent training has focused on broader changes in responsibilities. In the past, when developing the biennial training, OSS sought input from SSMs and PCSSOs on an ad hoc basis. However, no formal process exists.

Other Peace Corps staff members have recognized the need for a more formalized training program. Specifically, one PCSSO suggested a formalized training program for all new SSMs to ensure they receive standardized information when they start work at the Peace Corps. Further, one CD suggested that each PCSSO conduct an annual meeting with the SSMs in their region to review best practices and lessons learned. While OSS is aware of these suggestions, this formalized training has not been a high priority due to the high cost and resources needed to develop this program.

**Volunteer Safety at Risk.** Without proper training for SSMs, Volunteer security could be at risk. Specifically, lacking of training on using GPS and testing security equipment has potential risk that emergency responders might be unable to locate a Volunteer residence or consolidation point timely. Furthermore, without training on analyzing crime trends, a SSM could possibly miss a larger security concern, such as placing Volunteers in an unsafe location.

**We recommend:**

- 7. That the Office of Safety and Security develop a formal process that annually gathers input from safety and security managers on training needs.**

***STANDARDIZED SOW FOR THE SSM POSITION NOT CONSISTENTLY FOLLOWED***

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Although the agency updated and published a standardized SOW for the SSM position, not all posts followed the template for the SOW for the SSM position. In February 2014, OSS implemented better controls to ensure the correct SOW is used. By having accurate and consistent SOWs, this will prevent an individual from being selected for the position without the required safety and security experience and SSMs will better understand the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of their positions and be held to perform at the same standard.

**Standardized SOW.** MS 130, “Office of Safety and Security,” describes the organization, mission, and functions of the Office of Safety and Security. Section 5.2 “Overseas Operations” states that OSS “develops and updates agency procedures and guidelines related to the safety and security of V/Ts and overseas staff.” In response to the 2010 OIG audit of safety and security, OSS developed a standardized SOW for the SSM position. This SOW was published on the SSM resource page of the Peace Corps Intranet.

**SOW Template Not Followed.** Although the agency updated and published a standardized SOW for the SSM position, posts did not always follow the template. We reviewed 11 SOWs and determined that five posts deviated slightly from the standardized SOW.<sup>10</sup> Of the five SOWs that had deviated, one post included unrelated collateral duties, such as “the SSM may be required to courier cash and/or purchase orders to various vendors who furnish supplies and/or services to training sites.” The other four SOWs were missing the following statement regarding SSM qualifications:

The required qualifications, skills and abilities to effectively carry out the duties of the position, such as:

- Experience with safety and security programs of Peace Corps  
– OR –
- Experience with safety and security programs of similar NGO/development organizations  
– OR –
- Relevant professional security or law enforcement experience  
– AND –
- Ability to develop and maintain effective working relationship with other organizations, including local law enforcement, criminal justice, emergency management and other NGO/development agencies;
- Ability to analyze crime trends and other risks and propose mitigation strategies;
- Demonstrated organizational and communication skills;
- Demonstrated English proficiency, both written and oral;
- Demonstrated local language fluency;
- A high school diploma, college degree preferred.

Despite several posts omitting the qualification summary from the SOW, our review of 11 SSM resumes indicated that SSMs generally had the necessary minimum required qualifications. Specifically, all had the necessary safety and security experience, English proficiency, local language fluency, and a high school diploma.

**Controls Recently Strengthened.** OSS is uncertain why the SOW template for the SSM positions was not followed because it was provided to posts. In February 2014, OSS identified the need for better controls to ensure that posts were using the correct SOW. To achieve this, OSS provided the Office of Acquisitions and Contracts Management (OACM) with a copy of the SOW. OACM is required to review all new and renewed SSM contracts, which include the SOW for the position. By providing OACM a copy of the template, the office can verify that the correct roles and responsibilities are outlined and included in the hiring of all SSMs. This will prevent an individual from being selected without the required safety and security experience.

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<sup>10</sup> While we requested the SSM’s SOW from 12 posts, one post did not provide it.

Furthermore, by having accurate and consistent SOWs, SSMs will better understand the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of their positions and be held to perform at the same standard.

OSS and OACM have strengthened the controls in place to ensure that the standardized SOW for SSMs is consistently used; therefore we are not issuing a recommendation for this finding.

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## LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

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**We recommend:**

1. That the Office of Safety and Security replace the performance and accountability metric with one that is better suited to measure the agency's performance goal. The goal needs to be clearly stated, with consistent application of its measurement.
2. That the Office of Safety and Security develop timeliness requirements for issuing Peace Corps safety and security officer reports and holding criticality meetings.
3. That the Office of Safety and Security develop a process to monitor and ensure successful completion of the timeless requirements for Peace Corps safety and security officer reports and criticality meeting.
4. That the Office of Safety and Security create a centrally located, shared database of information related to Peace Corps safety and security officer reports, recommendations, and any actions post take to resolve the recommendations.
5. That the Office of Safety and Security develop and document clear roles and responsibilities related to communication with regional security officers including timeliness and methodology requirements of reporting serious incidents.
6. That the Office of Safety and Security, in conjunction with the Office of General Counsel, determine whether, similar to country directors, the regional security officers should be notified of rape and sexual assault incidents involving Volunteers and provided with the same non-personally identifying information about the incident, and that the agency revise its policies accordingly.
7. That the Office of Safety and Security develop a formal process that annually gathers input from safety and security managers on training needs.

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## APPENDIX A: OBJECTIVE, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

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In 1989, the Peace Corps OIG was established under the Inspector General Act of 1978 and is an independent entity within the Peace Corps. The purpose of OIG is to prevent and detect fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement and to promote economy, effectiveness, and efficiency in government. The Inspector General is under the general supervision of the Peace Corps Director and reports to both the Director and Congress.

The purpose of this audit was to conduct a follow-up on selected findings and recommendations from our previous 2010 audit report on safety and security. In performing this follow-up we did not address all of the findings and recommendations from our 2010 audit report, rather we selected the areas to review based on relative importance and various risk factors. The objectives of this follow-up audit were to determine and assess whether (1) the Memorandum of Understanding between the Peace Corps and the Department of State, Bureau of Diplomatic Security was disseminated and communicated to safety and security personnel; (2) Peace Corps safety and security officer recommendations are effectively tracked, monitored, and implemented; and (3) the qualifications and trainings of safety and security officers and safety and security managers are consistent with their roles and responsibilities.

Our audit conclusions are based on information from three sources: (1) document and data analysis, (2) interviews, and (3) survey responses. We conducted this performance audit in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

The audit work focused on the safety and security operations at 12 Peace Corps posts.

**Table 2. Selected Posts**

Inter-America and the Pacific Operations	Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia Operations	Africa
Guatemala	Albania	Benin
Paraguay	Kyrgyz Republic	Ghana
Peru	Morocco	South Africa
Vanuatu	Nepal	Zambia

These posts were selected based on number of serious CIRS reports and input from the regional directors. We conducted this performance audit at Peace Corps headquarters from December 2013 through August 2014. Our audit criteria were derived from the following sources: federal regulations, the Peace Corps Manual, industry best practices, and other Peace Corps policies and initiatives. Internal controls related to the audit objectives were reviewed and analyzed. Throughout the audit, auditors were aware of the possibility or existence of fraud, waste, or misuse in the program.



**Methodology.** We gained an understanding of the overseas safety and security program, reviewed relevant criteria, and interviewed Peace Corps management and staff in OSS to gain an understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

We surveyed each post's CD, SSM, and RSO about the SSMs' roles and training, DOS/DS MOU, and PCSSO reports and tracking. We developed our questions using professional knowledge of safety and security operations and by reviewing the previous OIG safety and security 2010 audit and 2008 evaluation. Eleven CDs, 12 SSMs, and 11 RSOs responded to our first request. We also sent follow-up questions on specific CIRS reports to RSOs and CDs to assess timeliness of communication. Ten CDs and 10 RSOs responded to our follow-up request.

In our initial survey of CDs, we also included a request that each CD provide a copy of the SSM's resume, SOW, and most recent performance appraisal. We reviewed the material for SSM roles and responsibilities, skills, education, and training.

We interviewed all PCSSOs and RSAs on the same topics described above. We then reviewed PCSSOs' trip reports and RSAs' tracking sheets for content, consistency, and timeliness.

## APPENDIX B: INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED

As part of this audit, we conducted interviews with 16 representatives, from Peace Corps headquarters in Washington D.C. and overseas. In addition, we surveyed an additional 34 staff members at the Peace Corps and Department of State.

**Table 3. Peace Corps Staff Interviewed**

Position	Office
<b>Acting Associate Director and Chief of Overseas Operations</b>	OSS
<b>Peace Corps Safety and Security Officer (9)</b>	OSS
<b>Regional Director</b>	Africa Operations
<b>Regional Director</b>	Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia Operations
<b>Regional Director</b>	Inter-America and the Pacific Operations
<b>Regional Safety Advisor</b>	Africa Operations
<b>Regional Safety Advisor</b>	Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia Operations
<b>Regional Safety Advisor</b>	Inter-America and the Pacific Operations

**Table 4. Peace Corps Staff Surveyed**

Position	Office
<b>Country Director (4)</b>	Africa Operations
<b>Country Director (4)</b>	Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia Operations
<b>Country Director (3)</b>	Inter-America and the Pacific Operations
<b>Safety and Security Manager (4)</b>	Africa Operations
<b>Safety and Security Manager (4)</b>	Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia Operations
<b>Safety and Security Manager (4)</b>	Inter-America and the Pacific Operations

**Table 5. U.S. Embassy Staff Surveyed**

Position	Office
<b>Regional Security Officer (11)</b>	DOS/DS

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## APPENDIX C: LIST OF ACRONYMS

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CD	Country Director
CIRS	Consolidated Incident Reporting System
DOS/DS	Department of State, Bureau of Diplomatic Security Office
GPS	Global Positioning System
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MS	Peace Corps Manual Section
OACM	Office of Acquisitions and Contract Management
OGO	Office of Global Operations
OIG	Office of Inspector General
PAR	Performance and Accountability Report
PCSSO	Peace Corps Safety and Security Officer
RSA	Regional Security Advisor
RSO	Regional Security Officer
SOW	Statement of Work
OSS	Office of Safety and Security
SSM	Safety and Security Manager
V/Ts	Volunteers and Trainees

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## APPENDIX D: AGENCY'S RESPONSE TO THE PRELIMINARY REPORT

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Since 1961.

**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Kathy Buller, Inspector General

**Through:** Daljit K. Bains, Chief Compliance Officer *[Signature]*

**From:** Shawn Bardwell, Associate Director for Safety and Security *SAS*

**Date:** March 2, 2015

**CC:** Carrie Hessler-Radelet, Director  
Laura Chambers, Chief of Staff  
Joaquin Ferrao, Deputy Inspector General  
Judy Leonhardt, Assistant Inspector General for Audits  
Carlos Torres, Associate Director, Global Operations  
Rudy Mehrbani, General Counsel  
Daryl Sink, Chief of Overseas Operations

**Subject:** Agency Response to the Preliminary Audit Report: Follow-Up Audit of the Peace Corps' Safety and Security Program Project Number 14-AUD-01

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Enclosed please find the agency's response to the recommendations made by the Inspector General for Peace Corps as outlined in the Preliminary Report of the Audit of the Follow-Up Audit of the Peace Corps' Safety and Security Program sent to the Agency on January 09, 2015.

The Agency has provided its response, and will work to address the recommendations by the set target dates.

**Recommendation 1**

That the Office of Safety and Security replace the performance and accountability metric with one that is better suited to measure the agency's performance goal. The goal needs to be clearly stated, with consistent application of its measurement.

**Concur**

**Response:** *The Office of Safety and Security is currently working on a performance and accountability metric that better reflects outcome goals that conform to the agency's strategy of measuring outcomes rather than inputs or outputs. The deadline for including a new performance metric into the 2016 PAR has passed, but the Office of Safety and Security anticipates a new performance and accountability metric that will be included in the Agency's 2017 PAR. The Office of Safety and Security is currently working with OSIRP to develop this new metric.*

**Documents to be Submitted:**

New performance metric for the agency PAR

**Status and Timeline for Completion:** September 30, 2015

**Recommendation 2**

That the Office of Safety and Security develop timeliness requirements for issuing Peace Corps safety and security officer reports and holding criticality meetings.

**Concur**

**Response:** *The Office of Safety and Security recognizes that timeliness of reports is an important element in assisting posts in meeting critical changes to their safety and security systems. As part of that process, the Office is working with Regions to develop a process that is most useful to posts, regions and the office of safety and security in communicating, implementing and tracking agreed-upon safety and security recommendations. One expected change is that there will no longer be "criticality" meetings as "critical recommendations" is not expected to remain a performance and accountability metric.*

**Documents to be Submitted:**

A new Safety and Security Instruction (SSI) detailing the process

**Status and Timeline for Completion:** June 30, 2015

**Recommendation 3**

That the Office of Safety and Security develop a process to monitor and ensure successful completion of the timeless requirements for Peace Corps safety and security officer reports and criticality meeting.

**Concur**

**Response:** *The Office of Safety and Security will develop a process to monitor timely completion of PCSSO reports and collaboration with Region to ensure that urgent recommendations are addressed. Per the response to number two above, the "criticality" meetings will be discontinued in favor of a new process for collaborating with Regions and posts related to PCSSO visits. It is expected that this process will be completed in conjunction with #2 above.*

**Documents to be Submitted:**

A new SSI detailing the process, coupled with the response in recommendation number 2.

**Status and Timeline for Completion:** June 30, 2015

**Recommendation 4**

That the Office of Safety and Security create a centrally located, shared database of information related to Peace Corps safety and security officer reports, recommendations, and any actions post take to resolve the recommendations.

**Concur**

**Response:** *This database will also be completed as part of #s 2 and 3 above. Depending on currently available technology, a temporary solution may be necessary until final software rollouts make a more permanent solution possible.*

**Documents to be Submitted:**

A screenshot of the database

**Status and Timeline for Completion:** June 30, 2015

**Recommendation 5**

That the Office of Safety and Security develop and document clear roles and responsibilities related to communication with regional security officers including timeliness and methodology requirements of reporting serious incidents.

**Concur**

**Response:** *The Office of Safety and Security concurs with the Office of the Inspector General that clear roles and responsibilities related to communications with Diplomatic Security Regional Security Officers is essential. However, based on general discussions with Diplomatic Security, the Office of Safety and Security generally believes that reporting serious crime incidents is functioning as intended and any variation from that is contextual and incidental. That noted, Peace Corps is currently in process of revising the MOU between Peace Corps and Diplomatic Security and will work with all involved parties to refine any language to better clarify expectations between the two parties.*

*Specifically, the Office of Safety and Security will seek to clarify and document requirements for sharing information between the Office of Safety and Security and Diplomatic Security regarding periodic inspection reports from PCSSOs.*

**Documents to be Submitted:**

The Revised MOU

**Status and Timeline for Completion:** September 30, 2015

**Recommendation 6**

That the Office of Safety and Security, in conjunction with the Office of General Counsel, determine whether, similar to country directors, the regional security officers should be notified of rape and sexual assault incidents involving Volunteers and provided with the same non-personally identifying information about the incident, and that the agency revise its policies accordingly.

**Concur:**

**Response:** *The Office of Safety and Security will re-engage with the Office of the General Counsel and other appropriate offices to make a determination, based on one year of programmatic data, to*

*determine if RSOs should be provided non-PII information in cases of restricted reports of sexual assaults. In October 2013, the Office of Safety and Security with the Offices of the General Counsel, Victim Advocacy, and Global Operations drafted language for the State/Diplomatic Security Memorandum of Understanding which is currently in the Department of State review process. RSOs are currently provided non-PII information in all standard cases.*

**Documents to be Submitted:**

The Offices of Safety and Security and General Counsel will submit a decision memo documenting the results of their meeting explaining the outcome.

**Status and Timeline for Completion:** April 30, 2015

**Recommendation 7**

That the Office of Safety and Security develop a formal process that annually gathers input from safety and security managers on training needs.

**Concur with explanation:**

**Response:** *While the Office of Safety and Security acknowledges that there is no **formal**, annual process that documents the collection safety and security manager input on training needs, this is an ongoing and regular function of the PCSSOs. Prior to any training event the office collects information from SSMs (Often through the PCSSOs) about the specific topics that SSMs feel are needed and undergoes a prioritization of the most important priorities. In order to satisfy this requirement the Office of Safety and Security will develop an annual process to identify what SSMs believe are the most critical training needs and factor those into the list of training priorities during each training cycle. Additionally, PCSSOs will be encouraged to use this information to plan their individual training programs with SSMs during their annual post visits. As a caveat, the OIG must understand that SSM identified training needs will be ranked along with other agency priorities and not all SSM priorities will result in agency priorities.*

*The Office however does **not** concur with the characterization that lack of, for example, GPS training poses a risk to Volunteers. SSMs have various methods of locating Volunteers during an emergency and GPS is only one of many methods that SSMs use when locating Volunteers in an emergency.*

**Documents to be Submitted:**

Survey and process for annual collection of SSM feedback

**Status and Timeline for Completion:** September 30, 2015

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## APPENDIX E: OIG COMMENTS

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Management concurred with all seven recommendations. In its response, management described actions it is taking, or intends to take, to address the issues that prompted each of our recommendations. We wish to note that in closing recommendations, we are not certifying that the agency has taken these actions or that we have reviewed their effect. Certifying compliance and verifying effectiveness are management's responsibilities. However, when we feel it is warranted, we may conduct a follow-up review to confirm that action has been taken and to evaluate the impact. All seven recommendations remain open. We will review and consider closing these recommendations when the documentation reflected in the agency's response to the preliminary report is received.

In response to the agency's comments indicating they do "not concur with the characterization that lack of, for example, GPS training poses a risk to Volunteers," we reiterate that Volunteer security could be at risk without proper training for SSMs. The GPS and security equipment example, while cited in our report, does not fully encompass our finding. Rather what we stated was that without a formal process to gather training needs from SSMs, OSS may not be aware of all the needs of the staff. In addition to GPS and security equipment training, we cited the need to adequately train SSMs in a wide variety of required responsibilities defined in their SOW including:

- Conducting annual crime trends analysis, sharing results with staff and Volunteers as appropriate, and coordinating modifications of safety and security program based on findings.
- Serving as the main technical advisor to senior staff at the post during an emergency.
- Managing the security and non-medical follow-up for Volunteer incidents of sexual assault.

We further noted how without training on analyzing crime trends, a SSM could possibly miss a larger security concern, such as placing Volunteers in an unsafe location. As for our GPS example, in presenting the audit results to OSS, senior managers were not aware of the SSMs' lack of understanding about GPS technology. By developing a formal process to collect input, OSS will better position itself to have an understanding of the needs of its staff and ensure that Volunteers receive the support needed.



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## APPENDIX F: AUDIT COMPLETION AND OIG CONTACT

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### AUDIT COMPLETION

This audit was conducted under the direction of former Assistant Inspector General for Audit Bradley Grubb by Program Analyst Kaitlyn Large, Senior Evaluator Reuben Marshall, Senior Auditor Waheed Nasser, and Lead Auditor Rebecca Underhill.



Judy Leonhardt  
Assistant Inspector General for Audits

### OIG CONTACT

If you wish to comment on the quality or usefulness of this report to help us strengthen our product, please contact our current Assistant Inspector General for Audit Judy Leonhardt at [jleonhardt@peacecorps.gov](mailto:jleonhardt@peacecorps.gov) or 202.692.2914.

# Help Promote the Integrity, Efficiency, and Effectiveness of the Peace Corps

Anyone knowing of wasteful practices, abuse, mismanagement, fraud, or unlawful activity involving Peace Corps programs or personnel should contact the Office of Inspector General. Reports or complaints can also be made anonymously.

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Online Reporting Tool: [PeaceCorps.gov/OIG/ContactOIG](https://peacecorps.gov/OIG/ContactOIG)

Mail: Peace Corps Office of Inspector General  
P.O. Box 57129  
Washington, D.C. 20037-7129

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