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OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

To: Aaron Williams, Director
Carlos Torres, Regional Director, IAP
Daljit Bains, Chief Compliance Officer

From: Kathy A. Buller, Inspector General 

Date: November 30, 2011

Subject: Final Report on the Program Evaluation of Peace Corps/Fiji
(IG-12-01-E)

Transmitted for your information is our final report on the program evaluation of Peace Corps/Fiji.

Our preliminary report contained 21 recommendations. Based on information and responses from management, we eliminated four preliminary report recommendations. Management concurred with all 17 recommendations contained in the final report. Based on the documentation provided, we closed eight of the 17 recommendations.

Our comments reflect the final report recommendation numbering scheme. Nine recommendations, number(s) 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 13 and 15 remain open. These recommendations will remain open pending confirmation from the chief compliance officer that the documentation reflected in OIG Analysis is received. Our comments, which are in the report as Appendix B, 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 Evaluation Jim O'Keefe or to Senior Evaluator Susan Gasper.

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

Attachment

cc: Carrie Hessler-Radelet, Deputy Director
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Peace Corps Office of Inspector General



Final Program Evaluation Report: Peace Corps/Fiji IG-12-01-E

November 2011

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over 2,200 Peace Corps Volunteers have served the people of Fiji since the program was launched in 1968. Prior to suspending operations in 1998, Volunteers served the country for 30 years without interruption. In 2002, the Fijian government requested Peace Corps' return and in late 2003 the program reopened. Volunteers work in two project areas: integrated environmental resource management (IERM) and community health promotion (CHP). At the onset of this evaluation, 61 Volunteers were serving in Fiji. The post receives one training class input per year, of approximately 30 Volunteers. The post had an FY11 operating budget of \$1.345 million and a staff of nineteen.

Peace Corps/Fiji's programming is wide-ranging and there is a need for closer collaboration with host country project partners. The country agreement between the Peace Corps and Fiji, established in 1968, should be assessed to determine if it remains adequate to the Peace Corps' needs. The country program has many stakeholders and partners with varying interests, but PC/Fiji (hereafter referred to as "the post") has not established Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with them to define and guide their working relationship with one another. Additionally, the country director (CD) does not maintain relationships with most Fijian government stakeholders, which could help ensure more high-level host government commitment to and support for the Peace Corps program.

The post has not managed Volunteer work site, housing, or other administrative issues effectively. Post leadership was perceived by Volunteers to be taking inconsistent actions, which created confusion among Volunteers, as well as raised concerns about timeliness and transparency in the decision-making process. Additionally, Volunteers raised concerns about excessive Volunteer drinking and sexual promiscuity and expressed the need for additional emotional and mental health support. Programming staff raised concerns about their ability to provide Volunteers with emotional support and requested training.

While Volunteers feel safe and supported by their safety and security coordinator, some raised concerns about emergency evacuation travel to consolidation locations over coastal roads during a cyclone or tsunami. PCMOs were not sufficiently engaged in the Volunteer site evaluation and approval process and are not made aware of Volunteer site assignments until after they had been finalized. This complicates the site assignment process for Volunteers with medical restrictions, who might need to be placed in a particular location for support needs. Additionally, Volunteers' housing did not meet all post-defined criteria and site locator forms did not contain key information.

Volunteer training generally provides Volunteers with needed skills; however, improvements are required in technical training programs. The post has focused efforts on improving training over the last two years. Systems for developing and managing trainings have been implemented and communication within the programming and training units has significantly improved. These efforts, especially the focus on rural

Volunteer community entry, are showing success. Additional efforts are needed to improve the Early-Service Training program, which is delivered about two months after Volunteers begin their work assignments.

Our report contains 17 recommendations, which, if implemented, should strengthen programming operations and correct the deficiencies detailed in the accompanying report. Management concurred with all 17 of our recommendations. Nine recommendations, number(s) 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 13 and 15 remain open pending receipt and review of documents to be submitted.

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HOST COUNTRY BACKGROUND

The Republic of Fiji is composed of 332 islands, of which approximately 110 are inhabited, spanning approximately 500,000 square miles of the South Pacific Ocean. It is known as the soft-coral capital of the world and thousands of miles of coral reef thread throughout the islands. It is home to a population of approximately 883,000 people.

Fiji obtained its independence from Britain in 1970. A succession of coups - in 1987, 2000, and 2006 - has left Fiji struggling to regain political and economic stability. Leaders of the most recent coup in 2006 established an interim government led by Commodore Bainimarama. The Fijian Court of Appeal declared the December 2006 coup and the interim government unlawful and the 1997 constitution was abrogated. A state of emergency was imposed in April, 2009 and in July 2009 the interim cabinet appointed Epeli Nailatikau, a former military commander, diplomat, and speaker of the House of Representatives as the new President.

Following the coups, Fiji has suffered a high rate of emigration of skilled and professional personnel, causing shortages in the service sectors and in the areas of education and healthcare. Half of the population lives below or close to the poverty line, particularly in rural areas. Over-fishing and environmental degradation have reduced food security from traditional sources. Revenues from tourism, expatriate remittances, and exported sugar and garments remain the largest contributors to the economy, though these have dramatically fallen with the current worldwide recession.

Fiji ranks 86 of 169 comparable countries on the Human Development Index (composite indices .669), and places above the regional average of East Asia and the Pacific (composite indices .650).

PEACE CORPS PROGRAM BACKGROUND

The Peace Corps has had a long history in Fiji. Prior to suspending operations in early 1998, Volunteers served the country for 30 years without interruption. More than 2,200 Peace Corps Volunteers have worked with local communities and organizations in various sectors, including education, business, environmental resource management, health fisheries and agriculture. In 2002, the Fijian government requested Peace Corps' return. In late-2003, the program reopened.

The post receives one training class input per year, of approximately 30 Volunteers. At the onset of our evaluation, there were 61 Volunteers serving in Fiji. The post had an FY11 operating budget of \$1,345 million and a staff of nineteen.

Volunteers work in two project sectors: integrated environmental resource management (IERM) and community health promotion (CHP) and are engaged in the following project activities:

- **Integrated Environmental Resource Management**

Volunteers work in partnership with ministries and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to promote environmental education, stewardship, and resource management. The project provides assistance in monitoring marine protected areas, waste management, and environmental education. A sub-component of the project provides assistance in small business development (SBD) and income-generation to promote more environmentally friendly income generation practices.

- **Community Health Promotion**

Volunteers in partnership with Fijian health educators provide rural health education and promotion activities related to non-communicable diseases, HIV/AIDS education and prevention, nutrition, and life skills for youth. Volunteers focus on skills transfer and capacity building for newly created health-promotion units at regional and sub-regional health centers.

EVALUATION RESULTS

PROGRAMMING

The evaluation assessed to what extent the post has developed and implemented programs intended to increase the capacity of host country communities to meet their own technical needs. To determine this, we analyzed the following:

- the coordination between the Peace Corps and the host country in determining development priorities and Peace Corps program areas;
- whether post is meeting its project objectives;
- counterpart selection and quality of counterpart relationships with Volunteers;
- site development policies and practices.

In reviewing the post's grant programs and performance reporting, the Office of Inspector General (OIG) found no significant areas of concern that would necessitate action by the post.

The post's programming is wide-ranging. Volunteers in the post's project sectors are placed in ministries, with NGOs, or in rural communities. Only 71 percent (15 of 21) of Volunteers interviewed reported favorably regarding their familiarity with project goals, but 84 percent (16/19) rated favorably their ability to accomplish project goals. Many of the Volunteers we interviewed stated that they only looked at project goals when they were filling out the Volunteer Reporting Form (VRF), but that the goals were broad enough that their activities corresponded. Sixty-eight percent of (13 of 19) Volunteers provided favorable responses to "How well does your Volunteer Assignment Description (VAD) match your activities?" Volunteers who rated "Below Average" or "Not at All" attributed the discrepancies to unique assignments or situations.

The greatest challenges faced by Volunteers in project activities were community motivation and village politics. During our evaluation, programming and training staff were in the process of defining criteria for an Initial Community Contact Person (ICCP), to help guide host communities in their selection of the ICCP. Even so, 95 percent (20/21) of Volunteers interviewed provided favorable responses to “how satisfied are you with your site?” and 95 percent (20/21) provided favorable responses to “is there enough work to do at your site.”

The post produced its first annual report to stakeholders in 2009 and staff reported that the data collected from the Volunteer Reporting Tool helps them monitor and evaluate their projects.

The country agreement between the Peace Corps and the government of Fiji should be reassessed to achieve cost savings.

The Peace Corps' country agreement with the government of Fiji was established in 1968 and there is official agency correspondence from 1972 that acknowledges the provisions from the 1968 agreement as still being in effect. Upon re-entry of the post in 2003, the original 1968 country agreement was used. A July 2002 Office of General Counsel (OGC) status memo recommended that, while the 1968 Country Agreement remains in effect, the Inter-America and Pacific region should consider whether the agreement remains adequate to the Peace Corps' needs, as the current agency model agreement is more favorable to the Peace Corps than the original country 1968 agreement regarding taxes on goods imported into or purchased in Fiji for the official use of the Peace Corps as well as an exemption from currency controls. The following is an excerpt from the status memo:

In particular, the 1968 Agreement contains what appear to be fairly unique provisions dealing with taxes on goods imported into or purchased in Fiji for the official use of the Peace Corps. Under the Agreement, such goods are tax-exempt pursuant to terms “negotiated from time to time between the Government of Fiji and the Government of the United States.” A 1968 memorandum in GC’s files that pre-dates the Agreement states that these provisions resulted from the colonial government’s insistence that refunding all duties on goods acquired in Fiji would be an undue administrative burden. It was apparently expected that, following the adoption of the Agreement, the colonial government and the Peace Corps Country Director would exchange letters in which the government would agree to refund duties on goods costing more than ₺25 (see footnote) and would also agree to sell basic office supplies, expected to represent the majority of needed items costing less than ₺25, to the Peace Corps at lower than retail prices. Unfortunately, GC’s files contain no evidence that such an exchange of letters was ever made. Nor do we have evidence of any other agreements of the kind envisioned by the Country Agreement.

There is no documentation indicating that this country agreement was ever revisited. An amended country agreement could realize a significant cost savings to the agency. Without a specific exemption from taxes and duties and exchange of letters by the CD, the post would not be able to claim refund of duties and VAT paid. Based on information provided, we estimate that the Peace Corps may not have claimed refund of approximately \$238,000 for the fiscal years 2008, 2009 and 2010, (or annually \$79,000).

According to *Characteristics and Strategies of a High Performing Post (CSHPP)*
Indicator 1.3:

The country director and staff have established the Peace Corps as a unique, serious, and capable partner in the host country's development process. The post has an up-to-date country agreement with the host government and staff members make effective use of local networks, resources, and activities to support the Volunteers and the projects in which they are working. They combine efforts with other partners and link the Peace Corps with appropriate development initiatives.

We recommend:

- 1. That the country director work with the Office of General Counsel to assess whether the Peace Corps country agreement with Fiji is adequate and update the country agreement as necessary; or conduct negotiations as called for in the agreement to get tax exempt status on certain purchases.**

There is a need for closer collaboration with host country project partners.

The post works with many stakeholders and project partners but does not have Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with any of them. Additionally, the CD does not maintain relationships with most Fijian government stakeholders. The post has held Project Advisory Committee (PAC)¹ meetings for the past two years. While considered a successful forum to provide outreach and education about Peace Corps, stakeholders did not provide substantial input to programming.

The country program works with stakeholders and partners at all levels of government, many of whom often have multiple interests. At the project sector level, the post works with partners including government ministries, international and local NGOs and local communities. Five of the IERM sector's eight major partners are government ministries,² though the primary project partner is the Institute of Applied Science (IAS), a research unit in the University of the South Pacific. The CHP sector's primary government partners are the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Youth. Additionally, to make sure that Volunteers' can address community needs through relevant offices, the post is working to further develop its relationships with four district commissioners who have assumed additional responsibilities as the Fijian government has decentralized. For example, village/community development plans and funding are now the responsibility of the four district commissioners. The Public Service Commission (PSC) has been providing Volunteers' housing.

¹ A project advisory committee (PAC) is the "voice of key project stakeholders" that helps the Peace Corps ensure that it develops credible, realistic and responsive project plans and training programs. The committee shares responsibility for the design, evaluation, and revision of the project.

² IERM's major ministry partners include Ministries of Environment, Youth, Fisheries and Forests, Tourism, Fijian Affairs, and Provinces and Districts.

The CD is the primary contact for the permanent secretary of the Public Service Commission, which oversees Volunteer housing. However, the post's program managers (PMs) have the primary responsibility for developing and managing relationships with government ministry stakeholders for project work. PMs believe that it would be beneficial for the country program if there was an established relationship between the CD and ministry permanent secretaries who provide programmatic input so that a commitment to work with and support the Peace Corps was established at the highest levels.

Program and Training (P&T) Guide 2, section B.3.2 highly recommends that every project have a current national or ministry level MOU: "Memoranda of Understanding that establish a clear understanding of the goals, objectives, and working relationship between the Peace Corps and host ministries help to manage expectations and add credibility to the Peace Corps' work in the country." Additionally, CSHPP indicator 6.2 provides guidance that "Peace Corps and host country partner agencies have memoranda of understanding, which describe and give guidelines for the cooperation between them. The MOU sets out the roles and responsibilities between the parties." CSHPP Indicator 6.4 provides guidance that, "The country director, PTO, and APCD/PMs have set up functioning channels of communication and use them regularly and effectively with host country government and partner agencies."

With no formal understanding of the goals and objectives of Peace Corps' work in Fiji, and without clear guidelines for cooperation, there could be a misalignment of expectations, roles or responsibilities between the post and its project partners. Without relationships at the highest levels of the organizations, it could be more difficult to get commitments from stakeholders. MOUs and stronger relationships with stakeholders could add credibility to Peace Corps' work in Fiji. Post leadership said that they – recognize a need for MOUs and are trying to determine with whom they should establish them.

We recommend:

- 2. That the country director establish Memoranda of Understanding with appropriate stakeholders.**
- 3. That the country director develop and maintain relationships with relevant permanent secretaries and other appropriate government stakeholders.**

Peace Corps Medical Officers are not sufficiently involved in the Volunteer site development or the site approval process.

The *Peace Corps Manual* Section (MS) 270.6 requires:

Each post must develop and apply criteria for the selection and approval of sites. Criteria should address work role, potential for integration, living arrangements, vulnerability to natural disasters, communication, transportation, access to essential health care and other support services, security climate, and consent of host authorities. Also, each post must review the site history, if there is any. Evaluation of the site and satisfaction of site selection criteria must be documented by the post.

CSHPP Indicator 11.5 for “Selecting and Monitoring Trainee and Volunteer sites” also states, “Site identification must be a collaborative effort, including programming, administrative, health, and safety factors and participation, and it is the country director’s duty to lead in and ensure this collaboration.”

The Peace Corps Medical Officers (PCMOs) in Fiji said that they were not satisfied with the health evaluation of Volunteer sites. The post’s site selection criteria have only two “medical” criteria regarding access to essential health care and other support services: the community must have access to water and cannot have tuberculosis present. PCMOs do not review the completed site development checklist for accuracy or completeness. Some Volunteers raised concerns with OIG about ongoing medical problems with an unknown origin. The post was in the process of testing water at some Volunteers sites as a follow-up.

Additionally, the PCMOs raised concerns that they are not made aware of Volunteer site assignments until after they had been finalized by program staff. This complicates the site assignment process for Volunteers with medical restrictions who might need to be placed in a particular location for support needs.

The post has developed a site identification tracking system to better manage the process and encourage collaboration between the units. Each community has its own worksheet and is rated against criteria. Once the site has met the criteria, the PM is required to obtain signoff from the medical unit, the SSC and the CD. This tracking system will be used for the upcoming site identification process.

We recommend:

- 4. That the country director ensure that a site identification system is implemented collaboratively that allows the PCMOs to: (a) review the criteria for identification of trainee and Volunteer sites and make updates as necessary; (b) review completed site development checklists for accuracy and completeness; and, (c) provide approval of Volunteer site assignments.**

TRAINING

Another objective of the post evaluation is to answer the question, “Does training prepare Volunteers for Peace Corps service?” To answer this question we considered such factors as:

- training adequacy;
- planning and development of the training life cycle;
- staffing and related budget.

The director for programming and training (DPT) reported that the post has focused efforts on improving its training over the last two years. The post implemented the Training Design and Evaluation (TDE) process and has developed core and sector training competencies and learning objectives. In reviewing the post’s process for planning and developing training, OIG found that the process includes input from programming and training staff. Safety and security and medical staff are included in the post Pre-Service Training (PST) review, but have not been included in the TDE process. All programming and training staff interviewed stated that under the currently serving DPT, effective systems for developing and managing trainings have been implemented and communication within the programming and training units has significantly improved. Post staff members reported that they have adequate resources to deliver Volunteer training. Additionally, post has received support from the office of programming and training support (OPATS) to enhance its language training. A language tester training workshop and a language and cross cultural facilitator LCF workshop were conducted in 2010. Post also received OPATS funding to improve its language manuals in Fijian and Hindi.

Volunteer training generally provides Volunteers with needed skills; however, improvements are needed in technical training.

Volunteers participate in several training events throughout their service, including PST, Early-Service Training (EST), and In-Service Training (IST). The post changed to a split PST model with its 2010 trainee input. With this model, trainees spend the first seven weeks of training focusing on language, culture and community integration skills. In the new model, EST is a more focused technical training held after Volunteers have been at site for approximately two months. We asked Volunteers to rate the effectiveness of these trainings and found that training is generally effective but that improvements need to be made in EST and PST technical training. This is consistent with 2010 All Volunteer Survey (AVS) data in which Volunteers in PC/Fiji rated PST technical training (38 percent inadequate) lower than the global average (25 percent inadequate). While IST ratings were also low in our survey, they only represent nine Volunteer responses.

Table 1: Volunteer Perceptions of Training Effectiveness

Area	(1) Ineffective/ (2) Below Average	(3) Moderate/ (4) Above Average/ (5) Very Effective	Average Rating
PST:			
Language ¹	10%	90%	3.9
Culture ¹	10%	90%	4.0
Safety/Security ¹	5%	95%	4.2

Medical/Health ¹	0%	100%	4.0
Technical ²	25%	75%	3.1
EST ¹	33%	67%	2.7
IST ³	22%	78%	3.1
PDM ⁴	18%	82%	3.8

Source: OIG Volunteer Interviews

¹N=21, ²N=20, ³N=9, ⁴N=17

Table 2: Perceptions of Technical Training Effectiveness by Input Group

Area	Percent of Volunteers rating “Average Effectiveness” or better		Average Rating	
	FRE 6&7	FRE8	FRE 6&7	FRE8
PST Technical	67% ¹	82% ²	2.8 ¹	3.3 ²
EST	78% ^{1*}	58% ³	3.1 ¹	2.4 ³

Source: OIG Volunteer Interviews

¹N=9, ²N=11, ³N=12

* EST for input groups prior to the split PST model was akin to IST

Table 3: Perceptions of Technical Training Effectiveness by Sector

Sector	Percent of Volunteers rating “Average Effectiveness” or better		Average Rating	
	PST Technical	EST	PST Technical	EST
CHP	75% ¹	67% ²	3.3 ¹	2.6 ²
IERM	88% ¹	75% ¹	3.1 ¹	2.9 ¹
SBD	50% ³	50% ³	2.7 ³	2.5 ³

Source: OIG Volunteer Interviews

¹N=8, ²N=9, ³N=4

The DPT explained that the post focused technical training on community entry skills and did not split Volunteers by sector in the 2010 PST³. Volunteers stated that PST technical training content was broadly based and did not focus on the work they perform on their projects, though most Volunteers commended the gardening and waste management skills they learned. Urban Volunteers commented that the technical training was very focused on rural site placements. As noted in tables above, PST technical training is now more in line with global AVS averages, and for Volunteers who went through the 2010 PST, scores are above global averages. Volunteers in the IERM sector rated PST technical above the global average.

Volunteers stated that EST was disorganized, rushed and “seemed thrown together.” Staff stated that the post had intently focused on PST and that they did not put the time and effort needed into EST. Staff also recognized that all EST training sessions did not

³ The FRE8 group went through the 2010 PST.

align with post's project plans and did not address learning objectives. Though our sample of SBD Volunteers was small, half rated both PST technical and EST as ineffective. The SBD project is a sub component of the IERM project; there is no separate SBD project plan.

Post staff have taken actions to improve technical training during PST, and it appears that their efforts, especially to help rural volunteers gain community entry, are showing success. To further improve Volunteers' ability to successfully complete their jobs, additional efforts are needed to improve the next EST. Additionally, overall technical training for the SBD Volunteers needs further assessment.

We recommend:

- 5. That the post revise Early-Service Training to align with the post's project plans and incorporate learning objectives.**
- 6. That the post assess and implement ways to improve technical training for small business development Volunteers.**

VOLUNTEER SUPPORT

Our country program evaluation attempts to answer the question, "Has post provided adequate support and oversight to Volunteers?" To determine this, we assessed numerous factors, including staff-Volunteer communications; project and status report feedback; medical support; safety and security support including staff visits to Volunteer work sites, the Emergency Action Plan (EAP) and the handling of crime incidents; and the adequacy of the Volunteer living allowance.

In reviewing the VAC, Volunteer living allowance, overall staff support, site visits, and quarterly report feedback, OIG found no significant areas of concern that would necessitate action by the post. Ninety-four percent of Volunteers interviewed rated the VAC favorably in terms of effectiveness and 81 percent (17 of 21) rated their living allowance favorably. The four who provided a below average or lower response were urban volunteers, who reported difficulties with the sufficiency of the allowance. The post conducts a living allowance survey every year and was in the process of analyzing results during the fieldwork portion of this evaluation.

Volunteer feedback, VAC meeting minutes and AVS data all indicate a need to address programming support issues. The post's 2010 AVS results were approximately 10 percentage points lower than global averages for APCD/PM support on the dimensions of responsiveness, informative content and site visits.

The DPT and the P&T team said that they have been working to improve programming support through staff trainings. Programming and training staff also commended the DPT for instituting processes to help them better accomplish their jobs. Some examples include a tracking system for providing feedback to Volunteers, work periods devoted to providing feedback, a project tracking system for PST and other training events, and a site development tracking mechanism.

Our evaluation found that Volunteer support has improved based on the dimensions we review. Ninety percent (19/21) of Volunteers said that the number of site visits they had received was adequate and 94 percent (17/18) rated these visits favorably in terms of meeting their support needs. Eighteen of 19 Volunteers rated favorably staff's responsiveness to issues raised. Additionally, 100 percent (20 of 20) of Volunteers gave favorable responses to "How often do you receive feedback from your PM on trimester reports?" Ninety percent (18 of 20) of Volunteers interviewed gave favorable responses to the quality of feedback received.

Overall staff support scores are reflected in the table below.

Table 4: Volunteer Perceptions of Support by Function

Area of Support	% of Volunteers Who Rated Staff Support Favorably	Average Rating
Leadership	85%	3.8
Programming	92%	4.2
Training	84%	3.5
SS	100%	4.6
Medical	100%	4.3
Administrative	94%	4.4

Source: OIG Volunteer Interviews

Volunteers' housing did not meet all post defined criteria.

OIG observations at twelve Volunteer sites revealed that only four of 12 (33 percent) doors met the post's criterion to have two tower bolts on every door. Two of six external doors at urban sites did not meet the post's criterion that external doors have one deadbolt with a key.

MS 270.6.2 requires:

All V/T housing or host family arrangements must be inspected by post staff (or a trained designee) prior to occupancy to ensure each house and/or home-stay arrangement meets all minimum standards as established by the Peace Corps and the post. Reports of the inspections must be documented and maintained by the post.

The post is not ensuring that each Volunteer house meets all minimum post standards. Additionally, a 2009 Peace Corps safety and security officer (PCSSO) professional recommendation to build a photo file of Volunteer housing so that the post ensures that housing criteria is met prior to Volunteer occupancy, was not implemented. Guidelines for the photo file have been developed but have not been fully implemented by staff conducting site development.

We recommend:

- 7. That the country director implement a mechanism to ensure that Volunteers' housing meets required criteria prior to Volunteer occupancy.**
- 8. That the post build a photo file of Volunteer housing to ensure that housing criteria is met prior to Volunteer occupancy.**

Site locator forms did not contain key information.

Our analysis of 15 site locator forms uncovered the following missing information:

- 5 of 15 (33 percent) contained non-cell phone contact information
- 8 of 15 (53 percent) contained information on the local police post
- 8 of 15 (53 percent) contained information on the nearest medical facility
- 11 of 15 (73 percent) contained adequate maps to Volunteer sites

The agency has a standard operating procedure for site locator forms. Its purpose is to ensure that accurate communication and logistical information is collected, stored, and readily available to all staff with an active role in the support of Volunteers during crises. The procedures require that the SSC work with appropriate staff to ensure that site locator information is reviewed during all site visits, including global positioning services data, where permissible.

We recommend:

- 9. That the post implement a mechanism to ensure that site locator forms contain all necessary information.**
- 10. That the safety and security coordinator work with appropriate staff to ensure that**

site locator information is reviewed, and updated as necessary, during all site visits.

Volunteers raised concerns about their evacuation plan in the event of a localized emergency.

Twenty of 21 Volunteers (95 percent) interviewed could name their consolidation points and 14 of 17 could produce a copy of their EAP⁴. However, five raised concerns about travelling to their consolidation points over low lying coastal roads in the event of a cyclone or tsunami. Two said that in the event of a major disaster, they would do something different than what they understood to be the direction from the post's EAP.

Post staff and Volunteers drew attention to the fact that communicating via mobile phones was a challenge, especially in rural areas, where service coverage was limited or volunteers turned off their phones to conserve battery power. When interviewed, the Embassy regional security officer (RSO) also commented that Volunteers in remote locations could have challenges with communications. The RSO could not produce a copy of Peace Corps' EAP, but stated that responses to emergencies are coordinated between agencies.

The post activated its EAP 11 times due to weather related issues in 2009. In November 2009, post completed a communications test using only landline contact numbers, and was able to contact 82 percent of Volunteers within 23 hours. During the last hour of the test, post resorted to using mobile lines and email and was able to contact all Volunteers within 24 hours.

MS 270.8 requires each post develop and maintain a detailed EAP that addresses the most likely emergency situations that would impact Peace Corps personnel and operations. The EAP must detail country-specific issues and procedures. The post's EAP details what V/Ts are to do in the case of localized emergencies and covers cyclones, flooding, tsunami and political instability/social unrest.

The plan states that if a Volunteer feels that it is unsafe to remain at his or her site, he or she should attempt to contact the post for guidance and assistance, but if unable, should move to his/her primary consolidation point or another Volunteer's site by the most direct and safest means possible. While the post's EAP covers localized emergencies as required, much is left to interpretation by the Volunteer about exactly what to do and Volunteers could be then be relying on the post to provide them guidance and assistance via mobile phone or text messaging.

In a 2009 PCSSO report, the PCSSO issued a professional recommendation to have trainees develop a written Personal Safety Plan that can be reviewed with staff during site

⁴ Four Volunteers were not interviewed at their house or were at a temporary living location and were not included in this question.

visits to promote personal responsibility for safety and security. The post chose not to institute this practice as time during PST was limited and stated that much of the information that would be in a PSP could be found in the Site Locator form. However, a personal safety plan could provide an opportunity for Volunteers and trainees to develop an individualized strategy for responding to emergencies that they understood and bought into which could increase their confidence in localized emergency response.

We recommend:

11. That the country director institute a mechanism, such as a personal safety plan, that would ensure that Volunteers could respond to different emergency scenarios.

12. That the post institute annual non-cell phone communications testing.

Volunteers raised concerns about their emotional and mental health support.

When asked about any concerns regarding behavior that could jeopardize the reputation of the Peace Corps or put someone in danger, six Volunteers voiced concerns about excessive Volunteer drinking and sexual promiscuity and the need for additional emotional support:

“I worry a little about whenever everybody gets together, they drink a lot. We’ve been fortunate that no one has gotten hurt. The level of drinking that happens at Peace Corps happenings - it is a safety issue...”

“I’d like to see more emotional support because that’s part of the drinking - taking care of their emotional needs. I don’t think we were ever told we have a psychiatrist or a counselor to go to here...”

Volunteers provided additional insight about their concerns in approaching staff with emotional or adjustment concerns.

“There seems to be a sense of fear in admitting emotional or psychological concern for fear of being kicked out. One of the guys we trained with, after training, he was here one day and gone the next and we didn’t get a clear picture of what happened.”

“When people quickly vanish [leave the program unexpectedly]..., [we] don’t know why that happened. And you know how the application process is...you’ve had depression – you need to have a therapist write out a 10 page report on it. It makes you nervous about reporting because Peace Corps makes such a big deal about it, even when you have a relatively clean slate coming in...”

“...if you have a safety concern, the SSC is there, a medical concern – the doctors are there. But, there is not so much of a holistic perspective. If it’s not completely medical or safety – who can you talk to you?”

Programming staff also raised concerns about their ability to support Volunteers emotionally and requested counseling training. One PCMO explained that Volunteers turn to whomever they are comfortable for emotional support. She also stated that she had recently learned that Volunteers were not aware of additional mental health support options available to them, such as seeing a local counselor, and that Volunteer had fears about coming forward to staff. She planned to address this topic in the next Volunteer newsletter. Staff also commented on the positive response to a diversity training session that was offered to some Volunteers and staff and they expressed an on-going need for such training, especially in the context of supporting diverse volunteers.

Indicator 6.12 of CSHPP states that “APCD/PMs are comfortable with, are trained in, and are carrying out the personal support roles they must perform in the area of Volunteer support. They have access to further training resources in these skills. They understand their limitations and know to whom they should refer specific problems.” As noted previously, the DPT believes that programming support has improved and that staff wants to support Volunteers. She also feels that guidelines related to volunteer support are "ambiguous and unclear" and there are no set criteria against which she can evaluate and measure staff performance. The DPT plans to work with the VAC to establish Volunteer expectations and to carry these forward to the programming staff to establish specific expectations that can be monitored to further improve Volunteer support.

The issues of how to better support Volunteers and address mental health concerns at post affect more posts than PC/Fiji. We noted that in a June 2011 study on Volunteer safety and security⁵, recommendations were made for continuous and consistent training for all staff on how to better support Volunteers, researching and developing a strategy to address mental health concerns at post, as well as a global strategy for building and supporting a culture of personal responsibility among Volunteers.

OIG supports the agency’s macro level recommendations for improving Volunteer support. We also believe that by helping staff and Volunteers better understand expectations and resources, the post’s situation could be improved.

We recommend:

- 13. That the country director and the Peace Corps medical officers lead a collaborative effort among staff who support Volunteers to ensure they are trained and ready to perform their personal support roles, understand**

⁵ Director Williams established a senior level team to conduct field research to survey Volunteers’ issues around safety and security, sexual assault, and unwanted attention; to evaluate staff and Volunteer training related to safety & security; and to examine opportunities for Peace Corps to strengthen current practices. The team’s presentation to Director Williams on June 13, 2011 highlighted many recommendations that are in concert with our findings in Fiji.

their limitations, and know to whom they should refer specific problems.

- 14. That the Peace Corps medical officers communicate mental and emotional support options to all Volunteers and trainees.**

The Post does not consider different living situations when determining settling-in allowance allowances.

Settling-in allowances are paid to newly assigned Volunteers for necessary housing supplies and equipment. Six Volunteers talked about the difference in requirements for the settling-in allowance for replacement volunteers compared to volunteers who are setting up a new site. They said that the settling-in allowance is not adequate for those who are setting up a new site, and said that it was more than adequate for Volunteers who were replacing other Volunteers. Overall, 14/18⁶ gave favorable responses of three or higher (78 percent) for the adequacy of settling-in.

MS 221.4.0 defines Peace Corps' settling-in allowance policy. Upon initial site assignment, Volunteers are provided a settling-allowance to purchase necessary housing supplies and equipment, which allows them to be involved immediately in their communities and gives them freedom to manage their own affairs. In order to determine the appropriate amount of the settling-in allowance, the post is instructed to conduct surveys on the prices of items commonly purchased by Volunteers with the allowance for each incoming group of Volunteers. Per MS 221.4.3, the items purchased with the settling-in allowance become the Volunteer's personal property, but when Volunteers complete their tours, the CD should ask Volunteers to donate items in usable conditions to appropriate institutions, including other Volunteers or the Peace Corps. Further, the *Overseas Financial Management Handbook* (OFMH), section 2.2 notes that posts may establish one rate for all trainees or may establish varied rates, to reflect different living situations.

We recommend:

- 15. That the post analyze whether settling-in allowances should be changed to reflect different living situations and act accordingly.**

⁶ Some volunteers chose not to rate this because they had interim housing situations or came in as a replacement Volunteer and did not feel comfortable giving a rating.

MANAGEMENT CONTROLS

Another key objective of our country program evaluation is to assess the extent to which the post's resources and agency support are effectively aligned with the post's mission and agency priorities. To address these questions, we assess a number of factors, including staffing; staff development; office work environment; collecting and reporting performance data; and the post's strategic planning and budgeting.

In reviewing staff performance appraisals, staff development, strategic planning and budgeting, and performance reporting, OIG found no significant areas of concern that would necessitate action by the post. In general, personnel files were well organized and comments on performance appraisals were generally thorough. The post has instituted quarterly staff trainings and post staff stated that staff development was supported by the post's senior leadership. The post uses an inclusive strategic planning process. The post produced an annual report for stakeholders. All but one Volunteer stated that they received training on how to complete the Volunteer Reporting Form (VRF). Eighty-five percent of Volunteers gave favorable responses to "How reliable is the information in your trimester or quarterly reports?"

The post also has a Management Advisory Committee (MAC) made up of elected host country staff. The MAC committee was initially formed in 2003 to establish a bridge between host country staff and management with respect to Fijian culture's respect for elders and persons in supervisory positions. Staff explained that they often don't feel comfortable raising issues to supervisors or "fighting for their own interests" individually.

The post has not managed Volunteer work site, housing, or other issues consistently and effectively.

Post leadership is not making timely decisions and is taking inconsistent actions with regards to Volunteer housing, work site, and administrative issues that arise. During OIG fieldwork, the post was in the process of re-assigning two Volunteers who had been on "Administrative Hold" for over two months to new assignments and/or housing. One of the Volunteers was living with the CD, to lessen the financial burden on post, and the other was housed with another Volunteer. A third Volunteer had established a new work site on his own initiative that had not been developed by post staff.

These situations created confusion among Volunteers regarding how post handled such issues, as well as concerns about consistency, timeliness, and transparency in the decision-making process. Volunteers cited examples and questioned inconsistencies in post actions regarding Volunteer administrative separations, though they acknowledged that there are things they wouldn't know because of confidentiality issues. Some staff also stated that they believed that administrative separations were not being consistently applied at post. Additionally, senior post management didn't believe that OGC supported their on-site Volunteer management decisions, particularly regarding administrative

separations, which created hesitancy or a reluctance to act on other similar issues occurring at post.⁷

Post management acknowledged that they had not always agreed on how to manage site change requests and other Volunteer issues. This has created confusion, led to Volunteer dissatisfaction and Volunteers' second guessing post's administrative decisions. The CD's communication style seems to have complicated this matter. Without the ability to effectively and clearly communicate policies and decisions, the issue is exacerbated.

The CD acknowledged awareness of Volunteer confusion and dissatisfaction in regards to administrative separations. The CD also acknowledged a desire to respond to Volunteer housing and work site issues when possible, as the post's programming is broad and there is flexibility in finding assignments that fit within the programming framework.

Although 85 percent of Volunteers interviewed scored the CD favorably in terms of support provided to them and stated that she was "nurturing" and "responsive," Volunteers also commented that her communication style is ineffective, in particular her written communication, such as emails, were unclear, inconsistent, and confusing. Volunteers also commented about a "disconnect" between the CD and Volunteers. Some staff members also raised concerns with the CD's communication style. Staff described the CD's communication as lacking focus and being culturally insensitive.

CSHPP Indicators 4.5 and 4.18, respectively, state:

The country director and senior staff set the tone and act as role models for both Volunteer support and appropriate Volunteer behavior. They do this primarily by applying the principles of effective communication, respect, honesty, and a clear commitment to the Peace Corps' goals in the country.

In problems involving Volunteer behavior or performance, a balance is maintained between supporting the Volunteer as an individual and supporting the program as a whole. The country director and staff work to help Volunteers through troublesome situations. Where corrective action or administrative separation is indicated, the country director and staff proceed with proper documentation and clear communication with the Volunteer and with Peace Corps headquarters. The process is transparent and objective.

An inability to effectively manage Volunteer issues affects staff and Volunteer morale and undermines the Peace Corps country program as a whole. Perceived inconsistencies in volunteer treatment, especially regarding consequences for behavior creates a lack of confidence in post leadership undermines management and ultimately the success of the post.

⁷ In its response to the preliminary report, OGC described the process it used to provide guidance to the post on administrative issues and maintained that the actions taken were sufficient and clear.

We recommend:

- 16. That the country director establish and communicate to staff and Volunteers a consistent and timely decision making process for Volunteer work site, housing, and other programmatic issues.**
- 17. That the Region and the Office of General Counsel work with the country director to clarify support roles and utilize the tools available for managing Volunteer issues.**

OBJECTIVE, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

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

The Evaluation Unit within the Peace Corps OIG provides senior management with independent evaluations of all management and operations of the Peace Corps, including overseas posts and domestic offices. OIG evaluators identify best practices and recommend program improvements to comply with Peace Corps policies.

OIG Evaluation Unit announced its intent to conduct an evaluation of PC/Fiji on December 10, 2010. For post evaluations, we use the following researchable questions to guide our work:

- To what extent has post developed and implemented programs to increase host country communities' capacity?
- Does training prepare Volunteers for Peace Corps service?
- Has the post provided adequate support and oversight to Volunteers?
- Are post resources and agency support effectively aligned with the post's mission and agency priorities?

The evaluator conducted the preliminary research portion of the evaluation December 13, 2010 – February 16, 2011. This research included review of agency documents provided by headquarters and post staff; interviews with management staff representing interviews with management staff representing the IAP region and office of programming and training support (OPATS); and inquiries to the office of safety and security, office of private sector initiatives (OPSI), office of intergovernmental affairs and partnerships, Volunteer recruitment and selection (VRS), office of medical services (OMS) and OIG audits and investigations.

In-country fieldwork occurred from February 22, 2011 – March 15, 2011 and included interviews with post senior staff in charge of programming, training, and support; the U.S. Ambassador; the embassy regional security officer; NGO representatives; and host country government ministry officials. In addition, we interviewed a stratified judgmental sample of 21 Volunteers (34 percent of Volunteers serving at the time of our visit) based on their length of service, site location, project focus, gender, age, and ethnicity.

This evaluation was conducted in accordance with the Quality Standards for Inspections, issued by the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE). The

evidence, findings, and recommendations provided in this report have been reviewed by agency stakeholders affected by this review.

INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED

As part of this post evaluation, interviews were conducted with 23 Volunteers, 14 staff members in-country, and 14 representatives from Peace Corps headquarters in Washington D.C., the U.S. Embassy in Fiji, and key ministry officials. Volunteer interviews were conducted using a standardized interview questionnaire, and Volunteers were asked to rate many items on a five-point scale (1 = not effective, 3 = average effective, 5 = very effective). The analysis of these ratings provided a quantitative supplement to Volunteers’ comments, which were also analyzed. For the purposes of the data analysis, Volunteer ratings of “3” and above are considered favorable. In addition, 18 out of 21 Volunteer interviews occurred at the Volunteers’ homes, and we inspected 12 of these homes using post-defined site selection criteria. The period of review for a post evaluation is one full Volunteer cycle (typically 27 months).

The following table provides demographic information that represents the entire Volunteer population in Fiji; the Volunteer sample was selected to reflect these demographics.

Table 5: Volunteer Demographic Data

Project	Percentage of Volunteers
CHP	43%
IERM	38%
SBD (subcomponent of IERM)	19%
Gender	Percentage of Volunteers
Female	52%
Male	48%
Age	Percentage of Volunteers
25 or younger	41%
26-29	28%
30-49	21%
50 and over	10%

Source: PC/Fiji Roster.

At the time of our field visit, the post had 19 staff positions. The post also employs temporary staff/contractors to assist with PST. Given the time of our visit, these positions were not staffed. We interviewed 13 staff members.

Table 6: Interviews Conducted with PC/Fiji Staff Members

Position	Status	Interviewed
Country Director	USDH	X
Director of Management and Operations	USDH	X
Director of Programming and Training	USDH	X
Executive Assistant	PSC	X
Safety and Security Coordinator	PSC	X
PCMO (2)	PSC	X
Program Manager Health	PSC	X
Program Manager Environment	PSC	X
Program Assistant Health	PSC	X
Program Specialist Environment	PSC	X
Training Manager	PSC	X
Training Assistant	PSC	X
IT Specialist	PSC	
Financial Assistant	FSN	
Cashier	FSN	
General Services Manager	PSC	
General Services Assistant	PSC	
Administrative Assistant/Receptionist	PSC	

Data as of March 2011.

15 additional interviews were conducted during the preliminary research phase of the evaluation, in-country fieldwork and follow-up work upon return to Peace Corps headquarters in Washington, D.C.

Table 7: Interviews Conducted with PC/Headquarters Staff, Embassy Officials and Key Ministry Officials

Position	Organization
Regional Director	PC/Headquarters/IAP Region
Chief of Operations	PC/Headquarters/IAP Region
Chief Administrative Officer	PC/Headquarters/IAP Region
Chief of Programming and Training	PC/Headquarters/IAP Region
Safety and Security Desk Officer	PC/Headquarters/IAP Region
Country Desk (3)	PC/Headquarters/IAP Region
Training Specialist, Language Testing and Training	PC/Headquarters/OPATS
Chief, Clinical Programs	PC/Headquarters/VS/OMS
Safety and Security Officer (PCSSO)	PC/Headquarters/Office of Safety and Security
U.S. Ambassador	U.S. Embassy in Fiji

Regional Security Officer	U.S. Embassy in Fiji
Senior Scientific Officer	University of the South Pacific, Faculty of Science Technology and Environment, Institute of Applied Sciences
National Advisor for Non Communicable Diseases	Ministry of Health

Data as of March 2011.

LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

WE RECOMMEND:

1. That the country director work with the Office of General Counsel to assess whether the Peace Corps country agreement with Fiji is adequate and update the country agreement as necessary; or conduct negotiations as called for in the agreement to get tax exempt status on certain purchases.
2. That the country director establish Memoranda of Understanding with appropriate stakeholders.
3. That the country director develop and maintain relationships with relevant permanent secretaries and other appropriate government stakeholders.
4. That the country director ensure that a site identification system is implemented collaboratively that allows the PCMOs to: (a) review the criteria for identification of trainee and Volunteer sites and make updates as necessary; (b) review completed site development checklists for accuracy and completeness; and, (c) provide approval of Volunteer site assignments..
5. That the post revise Early-Service Training to align with the post's project plans and incorporate learning objectives.
6. That the post assess and implement ways to improve technical training for small business development Volunteers.
7. That the country director implement a mechanism to ensure that Volunteers' housing meets required criteria prior to Volunteer occupancy.
8. That the post build a photo file of Volunteer housing to ensure that housing criteria is met prior to Volunteer occupancy.
9. That the post implement a mechanism to ensure that site locator forms contain all necessary information.
10. That the safety and security coordinator work with appropriate staff to ensure that site locator information is reviewed, and updated as necessary, during all site visits.
11. That the country director institute a mechanism, such as a personal safety plan, that would ensure that Volunteers could respond to different emergency scenarios.
12. That the post institute annual non-cell phone communications testing.

13. That the country director and the Peace Corps medical officers lead a collaborative effort among staff who support Volunteers to ensure they are trained and ready to perform their personal support roles, understand their limitations, and know to whom they should refer specific problems.
14. That the Peace Corps medical officers communicate mental and emotional support options to all Volunteers and trainees.
15. The post analyze whether settling-in allowances should be changed to reflect different living situations and act accordingly.
16. That the country director establish and communicate to staff and Volunteers a consistent and timely decision making process for Volunteer work site, housing, and other programmatic issues.
17. That the Region and the Office of General Counsel work with the country director to clarify support roles and utilize the tools available for managing Volunteer issues.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AVS	Annual Volunteer Survey
CD	Country Director
CSHPP	Characteristics and Strategies of a High Performing Post
DPT	Director of Programming and Training
EAP	Emergency Action Plan
EST	Early Service Training
ET	Early Termination
ICCP	Initial Community Contact Person
IST	In-Service Training
MAC	Management Advisory Committee
MOU	Memoranda of Understanding
MS	Manual Section
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
OFMH	Overseas Financial Management Handbook
OIG	Office of the Inspector General
OPATS	Office of Programming and Training Support
PAC	Project Advisory Committee
PAR	Performance and Accountability Report
PCMO	Peace Corps Medical Officer
PCR	Peace Corps Response
PCRV	Peace Corps Response Volunteer
PCSSO	Peace Corps Safety and Security Officer
PM	Program Manager
P&T	Programming and Training
PST	Pre-Service Training
RSO	Regional Security Officer
SLF	Site Locator Form
SSC	Safety and Security Coordinator
TDE	Training Design and Evaluation
USDH	United States Direct Hire
VAC	Volunteer Advisory Committee
VAD	Volunteer Assignment Description
VRF	Volunteer Reporting Form
VRT	Volunteer Reporting Tool

AGENCY'S RESPONSE



Since 1961.

MEMORANDUM

To: Kathy Buller, Inspector General

Through: Daljit Bains, Chief Compliance Officer 

From: Carlos J. Torres, Inter-America & Pacific Regional Director 
Eddie Stice, Fiji Country Director

Date: November 4, 2011

CC: Stacy Rhodes, Chief of Staff
Carrie Hessler-Radelet, Deputy Director
Joaquin Ferrao, Deputy Inspector General
Jim O'Keefe, AIG/Evaluations
Esther Benjamin, Associate Director for Global Operations
Bill Rubin, General Counsel
Ed Hobson, Associate Director of Safety and Security
Brenda Goodman, Associate Director for Volunteer Support
Amy Johnson, Chief of Programming & Training, IAP
Shelley Swendiman, Country Desk Officer, Fiji

Subject: Response to the Preliminary Report on the Evaluation of Peace Corps/Fiji

Enclosed please find the Inter-America & Pacific Region's response to the recommendations made by the Inspector General for Peace Corps/Fiji, as outlined in the Preliminary Evaluation Report of the IG Program Evaluation sent to the agency in September 2011. The program evaluation was conducted in February/March 2011 and Post received the Preliminary Evaluation Report on September 14, 2011.

The IAP Region concurs with all 17 recommendations provided by the OIG in its Preliminary Evaluation Report for Peace Corps/Fiji. Post has addressed and provided supporting documentation for 12 of the 17 recommendations and will work to address the remaining recommendations by the set target dates.

Response to the OIG Preliminary Report on the February/March 2011 Evaluation of Peace Corps/Fiji

In February 2011, the Inter-America & Pacific Region sent a four person team to the Pacific to conduct an assessment of the possibility of a management realignment of Fiji, Tonga and Samoa. The assessment team, composed of Roger Conrad, Kathy Rulon, Renwick Nelson and Shelley Swendiman, issued a report of their assessment in April 2011 supporting a sub-regional realignment resulting in the long-term reduction of US Direct Hire (USDH) staff in these three countries by thirty percent. This change will eliminate the Country Director positions in Tonga and Samoa and gives the Country Director in Fiji sub-regional responsibilities for the three countries. In Tonga and Samoa, each country will have an Administrative Officer and an APCD for TEFL Training as USDH staff.

The Regional Director will delegate to one of these USDH staff members the limited responsibilities of "Country Representative" within the country of service. The Country Representative's responsibilities will include the oversight of day-to-day operations of the Peace Corps Office, supervision of local staff, and coordination with the Sub-Regional Country Director in Fiji. The Country Representative will also have the responsibility of managing relationships with in-country partners.

In FY 2012, neither Samoa nor Tonga will have a new training class, and in Fiji, the level will be reduced by over 30 percent. By FY 2013, the Volunteer on-board strength will drop to approximately 28 each in Tonga and Samoa and 38 in Fiji. As part of the staffing review, the assessment team reviewed programming and training in each country to assure that their operations would benefit from the "Focus In/Train Up" strategy in the Agency's Comprehensive Assessment. The team recommended that each country focus on one distinct project (Primary TEFL education in Tonga and Samoa and a Health-related project in Fiji). This will allow a smaller staff to focus on quality training and Volunteer support.

For the Fiji sub-regional Country Director position, the Region selected Eddie Stice, former CD in Vanuatu. Eddie arrived in Fiji in mid-August 2011. Ruth Larimer, the previous Country Director in Fiji, transitioned to serve as CD in Tonga in September 2011 as Kelly Cullen, the former CD in Tonga, departed for an assignment in the EMA Region. Ruth and current Samoa CD Dale Withington will continue their service until the end of their tours in 2013 at which time the sub-regional realignment will be complete and operational under the guidance of the current Fiji Country Director.

1. That the country director work with the Office of General Counsel to assess whether the Peace Corps country agreement with Fiji is adequate and update the country agreement as necessary; or conduct negotiations as called for in the agreement to get tax exempt status on certain purchases.

Concur: The attached documentation shows that the country agreement was re-assessed in consultation with the Office of the General Counsel at the time of Peace Corps' re-entry into Fiji in 2003. Recent consultations with the Office of the General Counsel by the IAP region confirms that it would be in the best interest of the Agency to re-negotiate the current country agreement.

The Country Director, in consultations with and following the advice of the Embassy, recommends against seeking an update to the country agreement at this time. Both the Embassy and the Country Director have recommended that the Peace Corps wait until an elected government is in power and to enter into negotiations with that democratically elected government.

The Republic of Fiji has chosen not to reimburse VAT to any entity under the U.S. diplomatic mission, with the exception of VAT paid on fuel. VAT included in fuel purchases is reimbursable when the proper receipts are submitted along with the appropriate forms in duplicate. This VAT reimbursement procedure covers all official Peace Corps vehicles and personal staff vehicles owned and operated by Schedule 3 diplomats. At present, the two USDH staff are equivalent to Schedule 3 diplomats.

The Government of Fiji applies the same policy to all credentialed diplomatic missions in country. Several recent US Ambassadors have challenged this policy, seeking to use reciprocity as leverage. According to senior Embassy staff, there is no expectation that this policy will change in the near future, and is partly why the Embassy has recommended that Peace Corps address the country agreement issue when a democratically elected government is in place. The attached documentation shows that this has been an issue since at least 2008, and that the Embassy has also been unsuccessful in receiving VAT exemption. The current Country Director has not been able to identify any privileges or exemptions that the Embassy has that the Peace Corps does not have.

No further action is possible at this time as it has been shown that getting tax exempt status is not an option at this point in time. Once democratic elections have occurred and a new elected government is in place, the Region will re-visit the concerns raised by the Inspector General's office with respect to the country agreement.

Documents Submitted:

- 2003 email between the Office of General Counsel and the IAP Region indicating that the decision was made not to revise the country agreement at that time.
- 2008 email from previous Administrative Officer, Barry Gill, indicating the challenges that both Peace Corps and the Embassy have had with attempting to receive VAT exemption.
- Memo dated April 24, 2003 from the Assistant General Counsel

Status and Timeline for Completion: Completed November 4, 2011

2. That the country director establish Memoranda of Understanding with appropriate stakeholders.

Concur: Peace Corps/Fiji had already initiated discussions to negotiate and finalize MOUs with the then appropriate stakeholders under the leadership of the former Country Director, between 2009-2011, as shown in the attached documentation. However, the post has subsequently been moving to one single project in the area of health in conjunction with the Ministry of Health. The current Country Director will be working with officials of the Ministry of Health to develop, negotiate and finalize an MOU regarding the project.

Documents Submitted:

- UNIFEM MOU which was completed in August 2010 in conjunction with the Office of General Counsel and the previous Country Director.
- Ministry of Education MOU which was completed in March 2009 in conjunction with the Office of General Counsel and the previous Country Director.

- Correspondence between the Office of General Counsel and the former Country Director on the Ministry of Women MOU from May 2011
- SOPAC MOU correspondence from February 2011

Status and Timeline for Completion: MOU with the Ministry of Health to be completed by January 27, 2012

3. That the country director develop and maintain relationships with relevant permanent secretaries and other appropriate government stakeholders.

Concur: The current Country Director understands the critical need to work with the highest level officials of primary project partners. In the case of the health project described above, relationship building has already begun with the Permanent Secretary and the Deputy Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Health (MoH). The current Health Program Manager will also liaise with staff at the Director level and below of the MoH, forming a Project Advisory Committee (PAC) for the new project that is planned to meet on at least a quarterly basis.

The Country Director plans to meet regularly with AusAid, UNICEF, Save the Children/Australia, and all health donor organizations and stakeholders. These meetings will help to minimize duplication of activities, promote sound integration and also increase project-related resources for PCVs.

Documents Submitted:

- Letter from Ministry of Health indicating support for the sole Peace Corps health project and response from current CD Eddie Stice requesting a meeting and proposing an MOU.

Status and Timeline for Completion: Completed September 29, 2011

4. That the Country Director ensure that a site identification system is implemented collaboratively that allows the PCMOs to: (a) review the criteria for identification of trainee and Volunteer sites and make updates as necessary; (b) review completed site development checklists for accuracy and completeness; and, (c) provide approval of Volunteer site assignments.

Concur: All of the site selection criteria has been reviewed and re-reviewed by Medical, S&S, P&T, Admin, and the Country Director. After a thorough discussion with the PCMOs, an agreement was reached to ensure that the medical officers would be involved in initial preliminary approvals/rejections early on in the process for the obvious no-go sites, ongoing input into the selection process, and final approvals at the finalization of the site. The CD recognizes that this must be a collaborative effort with regular meetings including all parties. Site conditions change over time and the CD is committed to working as a team to review the site data and criteria on an ongoing basis. The CD has laid out a plan for the site identification of the next input of Volunteers in September 2012 (attached).

Documents Submitted:

- Community Health Empowerment Project (CHEP) Site Identification Schedule

Status and Timeline for Completion: Completed October 25, 2011

5-7. These recommendations have been collapsed into recommendation #4 per 10/13/2011 email from AIG/Evaluations.

8. That the post revise Early-Service Training to align with the posts' project plans and incorporate learning objectives.

Concur: The Early Service Training is a two-week Phase II PST that takes place 2-3 months after swearing-in. The content of the PST (Phase I and II) is determined by the overall 27-month training continuum including core and sector competencies and learning objectives. PC/Fiji has reviewed the draft Health Sector Guidance being produced as part of the Focus In/Train Up strategy and anticipates the final version scheduled to be completed and disseminated by the Office of Programming and Training Support (OPATS) at the end of December 2011. Post plans to align its new project with this guidance. PC/Fiji is also awaiting the training packages being developed by OPATS, including learning objectives. The health sector project plan that is currently being developed is in the attached draft project framework.

Documents submitted:

- OPATS draft Health Sector Guidance
- Draft project framework for the Community Health Empowerment Project (CHEP)

Status and Timeline for Completion: January 20, 2012

9. That the post assess and implement ways to improve technical training for small business development volunteers.

Concur: Per the recommendation from the Regional Management Assessment, PC/Fiji has already made the decision to Focus In/Train Up, in accordance with the Agency's strategy, and will have a single project in the health sector going forward. Attached is the quarterly trainee request submission for the next input (in FY12, Q4) requesting a full class of 25 AA 155s which are health extension Volunteers.

Without small business development PCVs in the next training class, there will not be a need for this kind of technical training.

Documents Submitted:

- FY12, Q4 Quarterly Trainee Request Submission

Status and Timeline for Completion: Completed July 24, 2011

10. That the country director implement a mechanism to ensure that Volunteers' housing meets required criteria prior to Volunteer occupancy.

Concur: The new Country Director is committed to working with staff to have full participation in the site development process and ensure that the housing meets the established criteria prior to the Volunteer's arrival at site. Better site development and PC/Fiji's concurrence and implementation with the following recommendation to build a photo file will better ensure that PCV housing meets the required criteria.

In the event that there is a change in housing or the community has not made the required changes, post is prepared to hold newly sworn-in PCVs in the capital until the required improvements are completed or make a switch to a backup site. Post will use a criteria checklist to clear on the items on the list during a housing inspection. A mechanism to ensure that housing criteria is met prior to Volunteer occupancy is to delay occupancy until all criteria has been met. The current Country Director is willing to make this commitment to fulfill this recommendation.

Status and Timeline for Completion: Completed October 19, 2011

11. That the post build a photo file of Volunteer housing and utilize it as a means to document that housing criteria is met prior to Volunteer occupancy.

Concur: Post concurs with this recommendation and is in the process of implementing a photo file of current Volunteer housing. As staff members visit PCVs they will bring cameras and will document Volunteer housing. The Post anticipates having all current PCV housing documented with photos by mid-December. When the next round of site development begins in Q2, FY12, Post will document sites that are being considered for PCV housing for the September 2012 group.

Status and Timeline for Completion: December 15, 2011

12. That the post implement a mechanism to ensure that site locator forms contain all necessary information.

Concur: It is the post's policy that all trainees are given a site locator form at the end of PST, Phase I. They are also given guidance on the importance of completing this form during their first month at site. The Safety & Security Coordinator (SSC) then tracks the submission of the site locator tracking forms and contacts the PCV when the deadline has passed. The SSC is responsible for reviewing the completed form in a timely fashion and for contacting PCVs when additional information is needed. As of March 2011, standardized guidance from Headquarters was sent to the field providing Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for SSCs. The CD assures that the Site Locator Form SOP will be implemented.

Documents submitted:

- Site Locator Form SOP from the Office of Safety & Security

Status and Timeline for Completion: Completed October 21, 2011

13. That the safety and security coordinator work with appropriate staff to ensure that site locator information is reviewed, and updated as necessary, during all site visits.

Concur: The Country Director is committed to ensuring that the SSC has verified that all site locator forms/personal safety plan forms (SLF/PSP) have been submitted as well as are fully completed. The following guidelines have been set out for all PC/Fiji staff:

- All staff that may be called upon to do an official site visit will be required to complete Site Locator Form/Personal Security Plan (SLF/PSP) training. This will enable staff to assist PCVs in the collection, recording and updating of the SLF/PSP form.
- All staff conducting official site visits will be required to take a copy of the current form on file with them during the site visit. While visiting the PCV the form will be completed if necessary and updated as appropriate. Upon return from the site visit, the staff member will inform the SSC if there are any changes and, if so, will submit as appropriate. This step has been added to the site visit checklist (October 2011).
- The SSC will be the keeper of the Site Locator Control Sheet that tracks the status of SLF/PSPs and responsible for follow-up on submissions and updates.
- Hard copies of the completed SLF/PSP forms will be kept by the SSC, CD, PCMC, DMO, DPT and PMs. Copies will be kept in the Duty Officer Handbook. The SSC will be responsible for communicating updates to the staff holding copies of forms and ensuring updated forms are included in the Duty Officer Handbook.

Documents Submitted:

- Report form for first PCV site visit
- Report form for second PCV site visit
- See SLF/PSP submitted for the following recommendation.

Status and Timeline for Completion: Completed October 12, 2011

14. That the country director institute a mechanism, such as a personal safety plan, that would ensure that Volunteers could respond to different emergency scenarios.

Concur: PC/Fiji currently works with PCVs to identify and teach appropriate responses to different emergency scenarios during PST Phase I, Phase II, and again at MST. To fulfill this recommendation, PC/Fiji has revised its Site Locator Form to include a Personal Safety Plan component as shown in the attached document. This more detailed form will allow PCVs to reflect on their personal safety in their site and be prepared to respond to potential different emergencies. This information will be updated on a routine basis as outlined in the response to the previous recommendation.

Additionally, the SSC, Training Manager and Country Director attended the Safety & Security Training for Trainers in Bangkok, Thailand in September 2011. The training and materials provided will allow them to more directly incorporate training on the personal safety plan into future training events.

Documents submitted:

- Site Locator Form with new (highlighted) Personal Safety Plan information

Status and Timeline for Completion: Completed October 12, 2011

15. That the post institute annual non-cell phone communications testing.

Concur: Post has implemented this recommendation. The details of this test are in the attached document and post will add a section on this in the next version of their Emergency Action Plan.

Documents Submitted:

- Communications test preparation instructions, October 13, 2011
- Communications test report, October 20, 2011
- EAP test script, October 20, 2011
- Fijian/English radio broadcast, October 20, 2011

Status and Timeline for Completion: Completed October 20, 2011

16. That the post furnish the regional security officer with a copy of the emergency action plan and ensure he has an up-to-date copy of the plan.

Concur: This recommendation has been removed for the final evaluation report per 10/13/2011 email from AIG/Evaluations. The EAP was submitted to the RSO via email on December 14, 2010.

17. That the country director and the Peace Corps medical officers lead a collaborative effort among staff who support Volunteers to ensure they are trained and ready to perform their personal support roles, understand their limitations, and know to whom they should refer specific problems.

Concur: Peace Corps/Fiji has already taken steps to ensure that staff are appropriately trained to perform personal support roles. In November 2010, the DPT from Indonesia, Betsy Vegso, conducted a training on diversity for the PC/Fiji staff. Additionally, staff trainings on communications support and cross-cultural understanding were led by the training team for the rest of the staff.

The CD and PCMOs propose that these trainings be part of an on-going quarterly staff development program. Topics that have already been identified are:

1. Communication: cultural differences, body language, active listening, etc.
2. Presentations from each unit on their jobs, what they do, how they can support other offices, etc.
3. Dealing with uncomfortable situations and recognizing one's own limitations.

A full-day staff development retreat has been scheduled for November 2011 and these topics will be part of the program. Staff will have the opportunity to propose further topics for sessions as the program continues.

Documents Submitted:

- PSN and Staff Development Trainer's Report, November 4, 2010

Documents to be submitted:

- Staff development program for November 9th

Status and Timeline for Completion: November 9, 2011

18. That the Peace Corps medical officers communicate mental and emotional support options to all Volunteers and trainees.

Concur: The PC/Fiji PCMOs concur with this recommendation and have already taken several steps to provide mental health and emotional support options to all PCVs and trainees. In June 2011, emotional and mental health was presented by the PCMOs during pre-service training with a follow-up session on October 7, 2011 during PST Phase II.

Additionally, the PCMOs have worked with the Volunteer Advisory Council (VAC) to provide additional support option information to PCVs.

Documents Submitted:

- Copy of the newsletter from May 2011 disseminating mental health information to PCVs (see page 6 with information from PCMOs)
- Minutes from the April 2011 VAC meeting where mental/emotional health information was given to VAC members to pass on to their peers as another method of getting information out to Volunteers.
- Communication from Dr. Josephine Piukala to PCVs, October 2011

Status and Timeline for Completion: Completed October 13, 2011

19. That post analyze whether settling-in allowances should be changed to reflect different living situations and act accordingly.

Concur: Last year's settling-in allowance survey was given to PCVs in July 2010, at the same time they were given the settling-in allowance. PCVs were given three months to complete the survey, but only five of 32 responses were received by post (around 16%). Post did not have enough data to analyze if spending was significantly different based on site placement.

Post sent the survey to the most recent group in July with a due date of September. Post has received 12 of 23 responses so far. Post is working with the Volunteer Advisory Committee to contact PCVs who have not yet submitted their surveys to encourage them to do so. Post staff members are also making calls to encourage PCVs to submit the surveys. Once surveys are received, Post will analyze the results to see if spending is significantly different for PCVs who are replacing other PCVs compared with PCVs who are going to a new site.

Documents Submitted:

- Settling-in allowance survey sent to PCVs

Status and Timeline for Completion: November 30, 2011

20. That the country director establish and communicate to staff and Volunteers a consistent and timely decision making process for Volunteer work site, housing, and other programmatic issues.

Concur: The Country Director believes that clear and consistent communication with staff and Volunteer is essential to the success of the PC/Fiji program. Thus, he has provided a written communication to staff clarifying the policy and laying out a clear outline of how Volunteer issues will be handled going forward. The Country Director is committed to ensuring that sites are well developed and, in the case a site does not work out, the steps for identifying a site and roles that staff and Volunteers play are well defined. This will lead to a smoother and more timely decision making process.

Documents Submitted:

- Email from Country Director to PC/Fiji staff outlining new policy on October 20, 2011

Status and Timeline for Completion: Completed October 20, 2011

21. That the Region and the Office of General Counsel work with the country director to clarify support roles and utilize the tools available for managing Volunteer issues.

Concur: The Region concurs with this recommendation. However OGC does not concur and maintains that actions taken by their office were sufficient and clear in providing support and guidance to the CD regarding the cited on-site Volunteer management decisions and that further action by OGC, beyond what they have consistently been doing, is unnecessary.

Managers at the post consulted OGC lawyers on a number of cases involving potential discipline against individual Volunteers. In reviewing the cases and discussing them with post staff, OGC has consistently pointed out that (1) underlying facts must be sufficiently clear or reliably confirmed; (2) the policies being enforced must be clearly articulated or documented; and (3) the policy should have been consistently enforced or a change in enforcement of the policy announced to the Volunteer community. In situations where the post was not able to satisfy these conditions, OGC has discussed with Post staff what its concerns were and offered suggestions for addressing those concerns. As a result, OGC does not believe they have an additional role in providing guidance to this CD on proper utilization of support and guidance, but will continue to provide legal support and guidance as appropriate.

The Region will encourage the CD to consult OGC early in the process and the Region will assume the responsibility for working with OGC and the CD to ensure that available management tools are used effectively.

The Region has worked with the previous and current CDs in Fiji to clarify the support roles and available tools for managing Volunteer issues.

Status and Timeline for Completion: Completed November 4, 2011

OIG COMMENTS

Our preliminary report contained 21 recommendations. Based on information and responses from management, we eliminated four preliminary report recommendations. Management concurred with all 17 recommendations contained in the final report. Based on the documentation provided, we closed eight recommendations. In its response, management described actions it is taking or intends to take to address the issues that prompted each of our recommendations. In our analysis below we describe the documentation or additional action required to close 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.

Our comments reflect the final report recommendation numbering scheme. Nine recommendations, number(s) 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 13 and 15 remain open. These recommendations remain open pending confirmation from the chief compliance officer that the documentation reflected in OIG Analysis below is received.

1. That the country director work with the Office of General Counsel to assess whether the Peace Corps country agreement with Fiji is adequate and update the country agreement as necessary; or conduct negotiations as called for in the agreement to get tax exempt status on certain purchases.

Concur: The attached documentation shows that the country agreement was re-assessed in consultation with the Office of the General Counsel at the time of Peace Corps' re-entry into Fiji in 2003. Recent consultations with the Office of the General Counsel by the IAP region confirm that it would be in the best interest of the Agency to re-negotiate the current country agreement.

The Country Director, in consultations with and following the advice of the Embassy, recommends against seeking an update to the country agreement at this time. Both the Embassy and the Country Director have recommended that the Peace Corps wait until an elected government is in power and to enter into negotiations with that democratically elected government.

The Republic of Fiji has chosen not to reimburse VAT to any entity under the U.S. diplomatic mission, with the exception of VAT paid on fuel. VAT included in fuel purchases is reimbursable when the proper receipts are submitted along with the appropriate forms in duplicate. This VAT reimbursement procedure covers all official Peace Corps vehicles and personal staff vehicles owned and operated by Schedule 3 diplomats. At present, the two USDH staff are equivalent to Schedule 3 diplomats.

The Government of Fiji applies the same policy to all credentialed diplomatic missions in country. Several recent US Ambassadors have challenged this policy, seeking to use reciprocity as leverage. According to senior Embassy staff, there is no expectation that this policy will change in the near future, and is partly why the Embassy has recommended that Peace Corps address the country agreement issue when a democratically elected government is in place. The attached documentation shows that this has been an issue since at least 2008, and that the Embassy has also been unsuccessful in receiving VAT exemption. The current Country Director has not been able to identify any privileges or exemptions that the Embassy has that the Peace Corps does not have.

No further action is possible at this time as it has been shown that getting tax exempt status is not an option at this point in time. Once democratic elections have occurred and a new elected government is in place, the Region will re-visit the concerns raised by the Inspector General's office with respect to the country agreement.

Documents submitted:

- 2003 email between the Office of General Counsel and the IAP Region indicating that the decision was made not to revise the country agreement at that time.
- 2008 email from previous Administrative Officer, Barry Gill, indicating the challenges that both Peace Corps and the Embassy have had with attempting to receive VAT exemption.
- Memo dated April 24, 2003 from the Assistant General Counsel

OIG Analysis: We acknowledge the agency's identification of this issue in 2003, periodic re-examination of the issue and confirmation that it would be in the best interest of the agency to re-negotiate the current country agreement. With the Chief of Mission not supporting a renegotiation of the country agreement at this time, we concur that the agency should move forward at the appropriate time, such as when an elected government is in power. This recommendation will remain open until such time. Please provide updates when action to close this recommendation has been initiated so that we may track this recommendation to completion.

2. That the country director establish Memoranda of Understanding with appropriate stakeholders.

Concur: Peace Corps/Fiji had already initiated discussions to negotiate and finalize MOUs with the then appropriate stakeholders under the leadership of the former Country Director, between 2009-2011, as shown in the attached documentation. However, the post has subsequently been moving to one single project in the area of health in conjunction with the Ministry of Health. The current Country Director will be working with officials of the Ministry of Health to develop, negotiate and finalize an MOU regarding the project.

Documents Submitted:

- UNIFEM MOU which was completed in August 2010 in conjunction with the Office of General Counsel and the previous Country Director.
- Ministry of Education MOU which was completed in March 2009 in conjunction with the Office of General Counsel and the previous Country Director.
- Correspondence between the Office of General Counsel and the former Country Director on the Ministry of Women MOU from May 2011
- SOPAC MOU correspondence from February 2011

Documents to be Submitted and timeline for completion

- MOU with Ministry of Health to be completed by January 27, 2012.

OIG Analysis: We acknowledge the agency's efforts to address this recommendation and await receipt of a copy the MOU with the Ministry of Health.

4. That the country director ensure that a site identification system is implemented collaboratively that allows the PCMOs to: (a) review the criteria for identification of trainee and Volunteer sites and make updates as necessary; (b) review completed site development checklists for accuracy and completeness; and, (c) provide approval of Volunteer site assignments

Concur: All of the site selection criteria has been reviewed and re-reviewed by Medical, S&S, P&T, Admin, and the Country Director. After a thorough discussion with the PCMOs, an agreement was reached to ensure that the medical officers would be involved in initial preliminary approvals/rejections early on in the process for the obvious no-go sites, ongoing input into the selection process, and final approvals at the finalization of the site. The CD recognizes that this must be a collaborative effort with regular meetings including all parties. Site conditions change over time and the CD is committed to working as a team to review the site data and criteria on an ongoing basis. The CD has laid out a plan for the site identification of the next input of Volunteers in September 2012 (attached).

Documents Submitted:

- Community Health Empowerment Project (CHEP) Site Identification Schedule

OIG Analysis: We acknowledge the agency's efforts to address this recommendation. Please provide documentation that demonstrates the elements of the proposed Volunteer site that PCMOs review and how the collaborative site development will be institutionalized.

(Preliminary Report Recommendation numbers 5-7 were combined into recommendation #4 per 10/13/2011 email from AIG/Evaluations.)

5. That the post revise Early-Service Training to align with the posts' project plans and incorporate learning objectives.

Concur: The Early Service Training is a two-week Phase II PST that takes place 2-3 months after swearing-in. The content of the PST (Phase I and II) is determined by the overall 27-month training continuum including core and sector competencies and learning objectives. PC/Fiji has reviewed the draft Health Sector Guidance being produced as part of the Focus In/Train Up strategy and anticipates the final version scheduled to be completed and disseminated by the Office of Programming and Training Support (OPATS) at the end of December 2011. Post plans to align its new project with this guidance. PC/Fiji is also awaiting the training packages being developed by OPATS, including learning objectives. The health sector project plan that is currently being developed is in the attached draft project framework.

Documents submitted:

- OPATS draft Health Sector Guidance
- Draft project framework for the Community Health Empowerment Project (CHEP)

Documents to be Submitted and timeline for completion

- Revised Health Sector project plans which include learning objectives to be completed by January 20, 2012

OIG Analysis: We acknowledge the agency's efforts to address this recommendation and await receipt of the revised Health Sector project plans which include learning objectives.

7. That the country director implement a mechanism to ensure that Volunteers' housing meets required criteria prior to Volunteer occupancy.

Concur: The new Country Director is committed to working with staff to have full participation in the site development process and ensure that the housing meets the established criteria prior to the Volunteer's arrival at site. Better site development and PC/Fiji's concurrence and implementation with the following recommendation to build a photo file will better ensure that PCV housing meets the required criteria.

In the event that there is a change in housing or the community has not made the required changes, post is prepared to hold newly sworn-in PCVs in the capital until the required improvements are completed or make a switch to a backup site. Post will use a criteria checklist to clear on the items on the list during a housing

inspection. A mechanism to ensure that housing criteria is met prior to Volunteer occupancy is to delay occupancy until all criteria has been met. The current Country Director is willing to make this commitment to fulfill this recommendation.

Documents submitted:

- No documentation was submitted

OIG Analysis: We acknowledge the new Country Director's commitment to full participation in the site development process and to ensure that housing meets the established criteria prior to the Volunteer's arrival at site. Please provide documentation as to the mechanism to ensure that all housing criteria is met prior to Volunteer occupancy. If implementing a photo file of Volunteer housing is the intended mechanism, we will review this recommendation concurrently when documentation is received to satisfy recommendation number 11.

8. That the post build a photo file of Volunteer housing and utilize it as a means to document that housing criteria is met prior to Volunteer occupancy.

Concur: Post concurs with this recommendation and is in the process of implementing a photo file of current Volunteer housing. As staff members visit PCVs they will bring cameras and will document Volunteer housing. The Post anticipates having all current PCV housing documented with photos by mid-December. When the next round of site development begins in Q2, FY12, Post will document sites that are being considered for PCV housing for the September 2012 group.

Documents to be Submitted and timeline for completion

- A sample from the volunteer housing photo file to be completed by December 15, 2011

OIG Analysis: We acknowledge the agency's efforts to address this recommendation and await receipt of the sample from the Volunteer housing photo file.

9. That the post implement a mechanism to ensure that site locator forms contain all necessary information.

Concur: It is the post's policy that all trainees are given a site locator form at the end of PST, Phase I. They are also given guidance on the importance of completing this form during their first month at site. The Safety & Security Coordinator (SSC) then tracks the submission of the site locator tracking forms and contacts the PCV when the deadline has passed. The SSC is responsible for reviewing the completed form in a timely fashion and for contacting PCVs when additional information is needed. As of March 2011, standardized guidance from Headquarters was sent to the field providing Standard Operating Procedures

(SOP; for SSCs. The CD assures that the Site Locator Form SOP will be implemented.

Documents submitted:

- Site Locator Form SOP from the Office of Safety & Security

OIG Analysis: We acknowledge the agency's efforts to address this recommendation. Please provide documentation that reflects the post specific implementation of this SOP.

(Preliminary Report Recommendation 16.) That the post furnish the regional security officer with a copy of the emergency action plan and ensure he has an up-to-date copy of the plan.

Note: This recommendation was removed for the final evaluation report per 10/13/2011 email from AIG/Evaluations. The EAP was submitted to the RSO via email on December 14, 2010.

13. That the country director and the Peace Corps medical officers lead a collaborative effort among staff who support Volunteers to ensure they are trained and ready to perform their personal support roles, understand their limitations, and know to whom they should refer specific problems.

Concur: Peace Corps/Fiji has already taken steps to ensure that staff are appropriately trained to perform personal support roles. In November 2010, the DPT from Indonesia, Betsy Vegso, conducted a training on diversity for the PC/Fiji staff. Additionally, staff trainings on communications support and cross-cultural understanding were led by the training team for the rest of the staff.

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1. Communication: cultural differences, body language, active listening, etc.
2. Presentations from each unit on their jobs, what they do, how they can support other offices, etc.
3. Dealing with uncomfortable situations and recognizing one's own limitations.

A full-day staff development retreat has been scheduled for November 2011 and these topics will be part of the program. Staff will have the opportunity to propose further topics for sessions as the program continues.

Documents Submitted:

- PSN and Staff Development Trainer's Report, November 4, 2010

Documents to be Submitted and timeline for completion

- Staff development program for November 9th, 2011

OIG Analysis: We acknowledge the agency's efforts to address this recommendation and await receipt of the staff development program for November 2011 and schedule of ongoing sessions.

15. That post analyze whether settling-in allowances should be changed to reflect different living situations and act accordingly.

Concur: Last year's settling-in allowance survey was given to PCVs in July 2010, at the same time they were given the settling-in allowance. PCVs were given three months to complete the survey, but only five of 32 responses were received by post (around 16%). Post did not have enough data to analyze if spending was significantly different based on site placement.

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Documents Submitted:

- Settling-in allowance survey sent to PCVs

Documents to be Submitted and timeline for completion

- Results of settling-in allowance survey sent to PCVs to be completed by November 30, 2011

PROGRAM EVALUATION COMPLETION AND OIG CONTACT

PROGRAM EVALUATION COMPLETION	<p>This program evaluation was conducted under the direction of Jim O’Keefe, Assistant Inspector General for Evaluations, and by Senior Evaluator Susan Gasper. Additional contributions were made by Reuben Marshall and Lisa Chesnel.</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p>Jim O’Keefe Assistant Inspector General for Evaluations</p>
OIG CONTACT	<p>Following issuance of the final report, a stakeholder satisfaction survey will be distributed. If you wish to comment on the quality or usefulness of this report to help us improve our products, please e-mail Jim O’Keefe, Assistant Inspector General for Evaluations and Inspections, at jokeefe@peacecorps.gov, or call (202) 692-2904.</p>

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