



OIG

Office of Inspector General

U.S. Department of State • Broadcasting Board of Governors

ISP-I-16-24A

Office of Inspections

September 2016

Inspection of Embassy Ankara, Turkey

BUREAU OF EUROPEAN AND EURASIAN AFFAIRS

~~**IMPORTANT NOTICE:** This report is intended solely for the official use of the Department of State or the Broadcasting Board of Governors, or any agency or organization receiving a copy directly from the Office of Inspector General. No secondary distribution may be made, in whole or in part, outside the Department of State or the Broadcasting Board of Governors, by them or by other agencies or organizations, without prior authorization by the Inspector General. Public availability of the document will be determined by the Inspector General under the U.S. Code, 5 U.S.C. 552. Improper disclosure of this report may result in criminal, civil, or administrative penalties.~~



OIG HIGHLIGHTS

ISP-I-16-24A

September 2016
OFFICE OF INSPECTIONS
Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs

Inspection of Embassy Ankara, Turkey

What OIG Found

What OIG Inspected

OIG inspected the U.S. Embassy in Ankara, Turkey, from February 3 to March 22, 2016. The inspection included the U.S. Consulate General in Istanbul, the U.S. Consulate in Adana, the U.S. Consular Agency in Izmir, and the Embassy Branch Office in Gaziantep.

What OIG Recommended

OIG recommended that the Bureaus of Near Eastern Affairs and Administration reduce processing times for vetting potential assistance recipients and program personnel to conform with the Quadrennial Diplomatic and Development Review mandate to standardize risk management and mitigation. OIG also recommended that the embassy and the Bureau of Consular Affairs eliminate the backlog of Iranian immigrant visa cases. OIG made other recommendations to strengthen operations in the conduct of foreign relations, public diplomacy, consular services, and management oversight.

- The Ambassador led a mission on the front lines of the fight against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, the 5-year civil war in Syria, and the related refugee crisis. He had been a key participant in the interagency policy formulation process and advanced coordination between the United States and Turkey despite strains in the relationship.
- Embassy Ankara had the fourth longest backlog world-wide in processing Iranian immigrant visas.
- Embassy Ankara and Consulate General Istanbul were not well coordinated on diplomatic engagement strategy or management oversight.
- Consulate General Istanbul's focus on a narrow range of issues and its heavy allocation of officers' time to internal meetings and visit support functions limited its effectiveness.
- The Syria Transition Assistance Response Team was an innovative approach to responding to the Syrian crisis that may be a model for operations in future high-risk environments.
- The Department of State's process for vetting program personnel and recipients of the Syria Transition Assistance Response Team's non-humanitarian aid impeded the delivery of high-priority assistance in Syria.

Office of Inspector General
U.S. Department of State • Broadcasting Board of Governors

CONTENTS

| | |
|---|----|
| CONTEXT..... | 1 |
| EXECUTIVE DIRECTION..... | 2 |
| Tone at the Top and Standards of Conduct..... | 2 |
| Execution of Foreign Policy Goals and Objectives..... | 3 |
| Internal Control..... | 4 |
| Security of the Mission..... | 6 |
| First- and Second-Tour Officers and Specialists..... | 7 |
| POLICY AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION..... | 8 |
| Foreign Assistance..... | 8 |
| Embassy Branch Office Gaziantep..... | 10 |
| Advocacy and Analysis..... | 11 |
| Public Diplomacy..... | 14 |
| Consular Affairs..... | 18 |
| RESOURCE MANAGEMENT..... | 22 |
| Labor Relations..... | 22 |
| Financial Management..... | 23 |
| General Services Operations..... | 24 |
| Information Resource Management..... | 27 |
| RECOMMENDATIONS..... | 29 |
| PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS..... | 32 |
| APPENDIX A: PURPOSE, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY..... | 33 |
| APPENDIX B: FY 2015 STAFFING AND FUNDING BY AGENCY..... | 34 |
| ABBREVIATIONS..... | 37 |
| OIG INSPECTION TEAM MEMBERS..... | 38 |

CONTEXT

Straddling Europe and Asia, Turkey is the world's nineteenth largest country by population and the eighteenth largest economy. Half its population of almost 80 million is younger than age 30; a quarter is younger than 14. Ethnic Turks make up 70 percent to 75 percent of the population; Kurds are 18 percent. More than 99 percent of Turkish citizens are Muslim, predominantly Sunni.

Turkey is NATO's eastern anchor. Approximately 1,800 U.S. military personnel (uniformed and civilian) are assigned to the embassy, Incirlik Air Base, and several other bases. These facilities provide projection platforms for U.S. military operations in the Middle East. Turkey has maintained a major humanitarian emergency response since the Syrian crisis began in 2011. According to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Turkey hosts the largest number of refugees in the world, including 2.7 million Syrian refugees.

Mission Turkey¹ is a category 5+ mission,² the highest level of the seven categories in the Department of State's (Department) Overseas Staffing Model. Total mission staffing consists of 276 U.S. direct-hire positions, 71 local-hire American positions, and 834 locally employed (LE) staff positions. Aggregate Department funding of the mission is slightly more than \$47 million. Although Ankara is the country's capital, Istanbul is the largest city in Europe with a population of more than 14 million and is Turkey's financial, business, media, and cultural center as well as a locus of political activity. Istanbul also has the largest urban Kurdish population in the world and is temporary home for approximately 366,000 Syrian refugees, according to the International Rescue Committee. The consulate general is nearly half the size of Embassy Ankara with 79 U.S. direct-hire staff members from 4 agencies in addition to the Department.

Prior to 2014, a small consulate in Adana was responsible primarily for reporting on the southeastern portion of the country and for providing consular services to U.S. military service members and their dependents assigned to Turkey's Incirlik Air Base. Proximity to Syria and the ongoing civil war there expanded the consulate's mission with the addition of permanent and temporary duty personnel as well as a Marine Security Guard detachment.

In 2015, the embassy opened a branch office in Gaziantep in southeastern Turkey, 40 miles from the Syrian border. The Embassy Branch Office (EBO) is an unclassified facility that provides a temporary duty platform for the interagency Syria Transition Assistance Response Team (START) to coordinate and synchronize U.S. assistance efforts in Syria. The START team includes 26 Americans assigned to the embassy and the 2 consulates. The Chief of Mission, who reports to the Department's Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs (EUR), has responsibility for the

1 Mission Turkey is made up of Embassy Ankara, Consulate General Istanbul, Consulate Adana, an embassy branch office in Gaziantep, and a consular agency and Foreign Commercial Service office in Izmir.

2 The Overseas Staffing Model is an analytical tool used by the Department to allocate full-time permanent American personnel resources worldwide in line with foreign policy objectives, legislated mandates, and Department priorities. Category 5+ includes a small group of the largest, most comprehensive full-service missions.

START team, despite the fact that its focus is Syria, a country in the area of responsibility of the Department's Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs (NEA). Gaziantep is in the Adana consular district but the EBO is an integral part of the embassy and is not under the supervision of the Adana Principal Officer.

On February 1, 2013, an indigenous terrorist organization known as the Revolutionary People's Liberation Party/Front attacked the embassy using a suicide bomber; one embassy guard was killed and a journalist entering the consulate for a meeting with the Ambassador was critically wounded. On August 10, 2015, two women from the same terrorist group shot at Consulate General Istanbul, setting off a brief gun battle with police. No one was injured. Immediately before this inspection, a suicide bomber attacked a group of tourists at one of Istanbul's main tourist sites, killing 10 and critically wounding several more. During the inspection, suicide bombers attacked a busy shopping street in Istanbul and detonated car bombs in two separate attacks in Ankara.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTION

OIG based the following assessments of embassy leadership on the results of 102 documented interviews that elicited comments on the Ambassador, meetings in Washington and Turkey, 279 surveys completed by American and LE staff members that included comments on Front Office performance, and OIG's review of documents and OIG observations of mission meetings and activities during the course of the on-site inspection.

Tone at the Top and Standards of Conduct

The Ambassador guided a mission on the front lines of the fight against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, the 5-year civil war in Syria, and the related refugee crisis. Mission staff consistently told OIG that despite frequent difficulties in managing the bilateral relationship, the Ambassador fostered a collaborative environment and communicated with employees in a manner consistent with the Leadership and Management Principles in 3 Foreign Affairs Manual (FAM) 1214. OIG pre-inspection surveys indicated that some mission staff members considered the Ambassador inaccessible. However, by the time of the inspection, he had improved and amplified his internal communications over a period of several months in response to feedback from the staff. OIG observed that the Ambassador used his country team and other internal meetings to make clear his top short-term and longer-term priorities.

OIG reviewed 7 months' travel, representation, and official residence expense vouchers for the Ambassador and Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM). Several mission management staff members independently told OIG of the Ambassador's strict adherence to Department standards and regulations. The Ambassador and DCM received high scores for ethical behavior in pre-inspection surveys. The OIG review confirmed these judgments.

Communication and Leadership Challenges in Istanbul

In the OIG pre-inspection survey of U.S. direct-hire staff—which evaluates chiefs of mission and principal officers on more than a dozen leadership attributes—the Consul General in Istanbul received lower scores for interpersonal skills, engagement, coordination, and vision than the average range of inspections of consulates over the past 5 years. Personal interviews during the inspection corroborated that the Consul General had difficulty engaging effectively with his American staff. He also faced a challenge in maintaining effective communications and trust with the almost 250-member LE staff contingent. Security threats to the consulate general, discontent with wages and benefits, and problems implementing a new employee evaluation system increased this challenge. OIG cited the Consul General’s high visibility outside the office and encouraged him to increase his visibility within the workplace as he had begun to do.

OIG also found that the Consul General had used three successive office management specialists to assist in the management of his official residence staff in carrying out private, as opposed to official, functions. This practice could be considered an improper use of Government resources. At a minimum, it created an appearance of impropriety. The Consul General told OIG he understood the need to refrain from this practice.

Execution of Foreign Policy Goals and Objectives

During the Ambassador’s tenure, the United States expanded efforts to degrade and ultimately destroy the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant: the Secretary of State engaged in intense diplomatic efforts to reach a political settlement in Syria and the Government of Turkey took steps to weaken the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant. In addition, a decade-long Turkish Government reconciliation process with the Kurdistan Workers Party broke down, leading to hostilities in Turkey’s southeastern provinces and to Kurdistan Workers Party-sponsored terror attacks outside the southeast. These developments affected American interests in Turkey and in the region. American and Turkish positions did not align on a number of important issues, including U.S. support for Syrian Kurdish groups and Turkish respect for freedom of the press. The Ambassador managed this important relationship and, with the support of a core team of mission leaders, coordinated with Turkey on the objectives of destroying the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant and fostering a Syrian settlement. Senior Department and other agency officials told OIG that the Ambassador had made himself a key participant in the interagency policy formulation process.

The immediacy of the mission’s top priorities constrained the Ambassador’s time for pursuit of other goals and for day-to-day management of the mission. The Ambassador recognized that he had limited time to engage on other priorities such as domestic governance, media freedom, public outreach, and in particular economic and commercial diplomacy priorities outlined in 18 FAM 000. OIG found that the DCM focused primarily on embassy operations and coordination but was unable to compensate when the Ambassador was overstretched. In addition, OIG found that the embassy and the consulate general were not well coordinated on diplomatic engagement strategy or management oversight.

Integrated Country Strategy

When he first arrived in Turkey, the Ambassador adopted three broad lines for Mission Turkey's engagement, which he described as presence, partnerships, and investment. He incorporated these into the review of the Integrated Country Strategy (ICS)³ and referred to them in country team meetings and separately to OIG when talking about his focus and mission activity planning. Beginning in early 2015, mission staff participated in the development of the FY 2015–17 Mission Turkey ICS that culminated with its submission to Washington in November. The Ambassador subsequently hosted a strategic planning off-site meeting in mid-December. Participants told OIG this development and review process created a stronger sense of the ICS as strategic mission guidance.

Mission Turkey's ICS develops four broad goals: deepening the U.S.-Turkey partnership in pursuit of shared security and stability goals; a strategic economic relationship, including more robust bilateral trade and investment; a stable Turkish democracy, including respect for human rights and rule of law; and a deep and stable U.S.-Turkish people-to-people relationship.

Istanbul–Narrow Focus, Limited Reporting and Engagement

Istanbul regularly hosts many official visitors and delegations. The U.S. Consul General is a prominent figure by virtue of his position, and OIG found that he participated in numerous official and cultural events. Although this engagement gave the United States a high public profile, it lacked strategic purpose. A review of the Consul General's appointment calendar for the 6 months preceding the inspection showed that his primary focus was on media and cultural issues. He gave less attention to economic and other political issues. Few of his engagements resulted in contributions to reporting. OIG also observed that he chaired an intensive daily schedule of morning meetings and found that the consulate general's overall effectiveness was limited by its focus on a narrow range of issues, combined with a heavy allocation of officers' time to internal meetings and visit support functions. During the inspection, the Consul General and his deputy adjusted internal meeting schedules to improve efficiency and focus.

Internal Control

Chief of Mission's Statement of Assurances

The 2015 Chief of Mission Statement of Assurances regarding internal controls identified potential deficiencies regarding motor vehicle safety and fire response systems. OIG reviewed corrective action plans and found that the mission had taken appropriate steps to address fire response and driver training, but drivers throughout the mission regularly exceeded limits on working hours. Attachments to the statement of assurances included DCM attestations regarding personal property management, overseas facility programs, and compliance with security standards. The statement also included a list of Federal Manager Financial Integrity Act

³ A multi-year plan that articulates the U.S. priorities in a given country.

management control reviews undertaken by relevant Mission Turkey sections. OIG found that back-up documentation provided by the embassy reflected a considered assessment of management controls. However, Consulate General Istanbul and Consulate Adana were unable to provide back-up documentation. OIG advised embassy management that the mission should retain documentation to support the annual Chief of Mission Statement of Assurances.

In Istanbul, OIG found internal control weaknesses in the management of the consulate general, which reflected insufficient oversight and poor organizational structure. These weaknesses represented a vulnerability to fraud. An August 2015 review conducted by the Frankfurt Regional Service Center identified most of these issues, which are addressed under Resource Management below, but they remained unresolved at the time of the inspection.

Rapid expansion of Consulate Adana staff and activity challenged its small and relatively inexperienced management team. The Principal Officer and Management Officer told OIG that they were aware these conditions could create vulnerabilities to waste and fraud. The Principal Officer committed to oversee personally the consulate's internal control challenges. OIG advised embassy management of the need to ensure prompt response to the consulate's International Cooperative Administrative Support Services⁴ requirements.

Ambassador's Deliberative Process Email Not Archived

The Ambassador's filing system for limited distribution email to senior policy makers did not preserve official records in accordance with Department standards. The Ambassador engaged in the Washington interagency policy process to achieve strategic goals and sustain a productive bilateral relationship. OIG determined that he used various communication methods, including classified email messages sent to a small group of senior officials, for reporting information and analysis, for sharing his perspective, and to influence decisions. In Washington, policy makers and analysts pointed to the Ambassador's effective use of limited distribution emails to inform and persuade. OIG reviewed more than a dozen such email messages in Ankara and found them to include important information for decision makers on U.S.-Turkey relations, Syria, and Iraq. The FAM (5 FAM 443) establishes principles governing preservation of email records and defines which email messages are records. Unless preserved correctly, the Ambassador's email messages risk being unavailable to document Mission Turkey's role in policy making. OIG also advised the Ambassador to consider including the reporting and analytic components of his email correspondence in restricted distribution official cables.

Recommendation 1: Embassy Ankara should document and preserve ambassadorial email communication in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

⁴ International Cooperative Administrative Support Services is the principal means by which the U.S. Government provides and shares the cost of common administrative support at its more than 250 diplomatic and consular posts overseas.

Security of the Mission

In pre-inspection surveys, American staff consistently cited the Ambassador and DCM for their involvement in supporting the mission's security programs. American and LE staff members also told OIG that both the Ambassador and DCM had responded—with regular engagement in town hall meetings and in smaller settings—to concerns about the increased violence in Turkey and terrorist threats against U.S. facilities.

In Istanbul, the Consul General and his deputy were focused on the security of the consulate general, which had been attacked by terrorists in the recent past. The Consul General worked effectively with his Regional Security Officer (RSO) and others to identify and mitigate threats. These efforts included coordinating with the Turkish National Police, who were responsible for external security protection. Following several terrorist attacks and ongoing threats, the Consul General and his deputy used town hall meetings to engage with the LE and American staff and their families, who expressed to OIG appreciation for their communication on security issues.

In Adana, the Principal Officer drew on her experience in Iraq and Afghanistan and gave high priority to consulate security. Embassy restrictions on travel to 16 of the 22 provinces in the consular district required an embassy clearance and additional security measures for each trip, resources for which were limited. She obtained embassy approval to hire additional security to facilitate officers' travel for outreach and engagement. Based on security concerns, the Department implemented Authorized Departure⁵ from September 3, 2015 until February 29, 2016. (The Department implemented Ordered Departure⁶ on March 29, 2016, just after inspection.)

Emergency Action Committee

Despite meeting frequently, Embassy Ankara's Emergency Action Committee⁷ (EAC) was neither efficient nor effective. Increased violence and terrorist threats necessitated frequent EAC meetings, sometimes two or more per week. Many of these meetings included Consulate General Istanbul and Consulate Adana EACs via video teleconference. The DCM chaired the EAC; in some cases, the DCM and the RSO convened meetings without providing an agenda in advance and some meetings exceeded 90 minutes. OIG discussed with the DCM steps to improve EAC meetings.

⁵ An evacuation procedure, short of ordered departure, by which post employees and/or eligible family members are permitted to leave post in advance of normal rotation when U.S. national interests or imminent threat to life requires it.

⁶ An evacuation procedure by which the number of U.S. government employees, eligible family members, or both, at a Foreign Service post is reduced. Ordered departure is mandatory and may be initiated by the chief of mission or the Secretary of State.

⁷ EACs at overseas posts are responsible for assisting the ambassador in planning and preparing for crises, including the possible evacuation of post staff, dependents, and American citizens, with support from Department offices in Washington, DC (U.S. Government Accountability Office-08-23 Report: State Department Evacuation Planning and Preparations for Overseas Posts Can Be Improved, October 2007).

No Tracking of Decision Points

The EAC did not review decision points at its meetings or report when events crossed these points. Decision points are a tool to ensure missions address security issues objectively on the basis of predetermined criteria. Neither the DCM nor the RSO included a review of decision points in EAC meeting agendas or proceedings. According to 12 Foreign Affairs Handbook (FAH) -1 H-232d, EACs must review established decision points whenever they meet and include the outcome of the review in a cable report of the meeting. If the EAC does not address decision points, it may sacrifice objectivity and tolerate unnecessary risk.

Recommendation 2: Embassy Ankara should require that Mission Turkey Emergency Action Committees review and report on decision points when these committees meet. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

First- and Second-Tour Officers and Specialists

The DCM oversaw Embassy Ankara's First- and Second-Tour officer and specialist professional development and mentoring program. First- and Second-Tour staff members consistently expressed to OIG their appreciation for the DCM's organizing speakers at his residence and for the attention he gave to them. Similarly, First- and Second-Tour officers and specialists in Istanbul expressed appreciation for the Consul General's contribution to their mentoring and professional development. The Istanbul staff welcomed especially the Consul General's initiative to assign them responsibility for visits, engagement in public outreach, and reporting on provinces and outlying areas of Istanbul's consular district. Ankara's First- and Second-Tour staff expressed a desire to participate in representational events and told OIG of their interest in having a program similar to the Istanbul initiative.

Front Office Staff Aide Position

The Embassy Ankara Front Office selected an officer from among the entry-level consular officers to serve a 1-year term as staff aide. This procedure allowed the Front Office to identify its preference from a pool of prospective candidates instead of the Department assigning an officer to the position through the open assignments process. According to 3 FAM 2423c "[t]he open assignments system is designed to engage all Foreign Service employees directly in the assignment process by disseminating information on all position vacancies... and offering the opportunity to compete openly for them." According to the Office of Career Development, normal Department practice is to establish a consular/staff aide rotation for which all eligible Foreign Service Officers may bid. At the time of the inspection, the officer serving as staff aide was one of three Farsi-speaking officers assigned to Ankara to adjudicate Iranian visas. The embassy selection of this Farsi-speaking officer as staff aide was a factor in the development of a 145-day backlog in processing Iranian immigrant visas, as discussed in the Consular section of this report.

Recommendation 3: The Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, in coordination with the Bureau of Consular Affairs and the Bureau of Human Resources, should establish a consular/staff aide rotational position. (Action: EUR, in coordination with CA and DGHR)

POLICY AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

START—An Innovative Model for Diplomacy in Dangerous Environments

START is a unique instrument for responding to the Syrian crisis. An integral part of Mission Turkey, START blends Department and U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Foreign Service officers, personal services contractors, U.S. military service personnel, eligible family members, and LE staff members into a cohesive unit to provide humanitarian and transition assistance inside Syria and relief to Syrian refugees in Turkey. At the time of the inspection, START had 26 U.S. personnel (15 Department, 9 USAID, 2 Department of Defense) members assigned to Embassy Ankara, Consulate General Istanbul, or Consulate Adana. START is staffed with positions and funding from NEA and the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, yet falls under chief of mission authority.

In 2015, the embassy opened the EBO in Gaziantep, a city near the Syrian border and a center for non-governmental organizations and moderate opposition groups. START personnel use this office for temporary duty workspace and meeting space. Working out of these four locations in Turkey, START personnel meet weekly in person and by video conference to ensure coordination of programs and coherence of purpose. START implements programs and also plays a key role in informing Washington officials of events on the ground inside Syria and along the Turkish-Syrian border.

OIG found that as the situation in Syria evolves, START is likely to remain and even grow over the next 3-5 years. START's capability to provide assistance and reporting in high-risk environments will continue to be essential during any transition period. OIG also found that START's model may lend itself to future operations in other high-risk environments in the region and beyond, where U.S. interests call for engagement but security threats preclude a U.S. diplomatic mission inside the country.

Foreign Assistance

START Provides Effective Program Management

START managed \$120 million in cooperative agreements funded by NEA. OIG reviewed grants files for three agreements totaling \$66.1 million for which START personnel serve as Grants

Officer Representatives and which OIG had not previously audited.⁸ All three programs provided non-humanitarian assistance through Turkey into Syria. In September 2015, NEA issued program amendments that recategorized all three programs as "high-risk" on the basis of their location. At that point, START and the program implementers incorporated corrective action plans as required by Section 3.04-A of the Federal Assistance Policy Directive to address related program management deficiencies. Files for all three programs were complete and contained quarterly financial reports and quarterly performance reports as required. All programs had quantitative and qualitative measurements of results. START and NEA provided OIG with the current Grants Officer Representative designation letters for each program.

More Independent Monitoring is Necessary

The Department and USAID contracted for third-party, independent monitoring and evaluation of some of START's ongoing agreements, but one agreement reviewed by OIG and totaling \$46 million lacked such monitoring. In addition, START personnel had been unable to visit any of the project sites of the three cooperative agreements reviewed by OIG because of security conditions inside Syria, which had deteriorated since the programs began. The Department's Federal Assistance Policy Directive Section 2.03-A on risk management stipulates that effective monitoring is crucial for internal controls in high-risk environments. As part of a risk assessment process, section 9.04 of the U.S. Government Accountability Office Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government requires management to analyze and respond to identified changes and related risks to maintain an effective internal control system. A lack of site visits or required monitoring in this high-risk environment increases the risk of waste, fraud, or abuse of Department resources.

Recommendation 4: The Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, in coordination with Embassy Ankara, should incorporate independent monitoring into all its high-risk Syria Transition Assistance Response Team-related programs implemented from Turkey. (Action: NEA, in coordination with Embassy Ankara)

Dual Vetting Processes Impede Delivery of Assistance

The Department's process for vetting program personnel and recipients of START's non-humanitarian aid impeded the delivery of high-priority assistance in Syria. Executive Order 13224 prohibits financial support for individuals or entities designated under the executive order as committing, or posing a significant risk of committing, terrorist acts. To comply with the Executive Order, the Bureau of Administration's Office of Risk Analysis and Management vetted potential assistance recipients and personnel for Department programs. USAID's Partners

⁸ OIG Office of Audits conducted audits examining NEA's implementation of the Middle East Partnership Initiative program. The first audit, scheduled to be published in 2016, examined whether the program was achieving its goals and objectives. The second examined whether incurred costs for a sample of selected grants and cooperative agreements were allowable under Federal and Department laws and regulations. (OIG *Audit of the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs Financial Management of Grants and Cooperative Agreements Supporting the Middle East Partnership Agreement*, AUD-MERO-16-42, July 2016.)

Vetting System performed the same function for its programs. Both the Department and USAID re-vetted contractors who moved from one program to another. OIG found that USAID's vetting process provided responses within 5 to 7 days. However, three of START's NEA programs had a total of 308 people pending in the Department's vetting process on February 26, 2016. The average wait time across the three programs was 56 days, although they ranged from 24 days to 302 days. According to 18 FAM 005.1-7(F), the strategic coordination and integration of Department and USAID programs are required. The 2015 Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review calls on the Department and USAID to implement a standard approach for managing and mitigating risk. OIG found the Department's vetting delays led to cancellation of planned assistance programs and twice forced a Syrian armed opposition commander, its only vetted unit member, to leave his unit in Aleppo to receive personally the unit's food assistance. Positions critical to implementing programs went unfilled for months while candidates awaited the outcome of the Department's vetting or accepted positions elsewhere, including with USAID implementers.

Recommendation 5: The Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, in coordination with the Bureau of Administration, should reduce the Department's processing times for vetting potential assistance recipients and program personnel to conform with the Quadrennial Diplomatic and Development Review mandate to standardize Department and U.S. Agency for International Development risk management and mitigation. (Action: NEA, in coordination with A)

Embassy Branch Office Gaziantep

Ill-defined Chain of Command

The EBO in Gaziantep did not have an officer in charge, either on-site when temporary duty personnel were present or to provide overall executive direction and oversight. The Chief of Mission is responsible for the security of mission personnel but did not assign overall responsibility for the EBO beyond delegating authority for approving travel to the DCM and the START Director. Embassy Ankara section chiefs oversaw EBO operations for their respective functions. The U.S. Government Accountability Office's 2014 Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government require the establishment of reporting lines, the assignment of responsibility, and the delegation of authority. According to 2 FAM 113.1c(5), a chief of mission must establish policies and programs to protect all U.S. Government personnel on official duty abroad (other than those under U.S. military command). The absence of a clear delegation of overall authority for the EBO undermines accountability, weakens internal control, and risks impeding decision making in response to security threats.

Recommendation 6: Embassy Ankara should designate the Deputy Chief of Mission to have general oversight of the Embassy Branch Office, including authority to designate an on-site officer in charge of the Embassy Branch Office whenever temporary duty personnel are present. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

Mission Travel Approval Process Needs Deliberate Planning Decision Criteria

Because of security concerns, the Ambassador established a travel approval policy for all official travel to 16 provinces in southeast Turkey. Embassy staff members and visitors submitted travel requests through respective mission sections for Regional Security Office clearance and final approval by the DCM. The Chief of Mission and DCM delegated authority to the START Director for final approval of travel by START staff to the EBO in Gaziantep. The embassy and START used common SharePoint and e-mail systems to process individual travel requests. OIG reviewed the embassy Security Directive containing travel requirements as well as the SharePoint forms and selected email notifications.

The mission's travel approval review process did not document the criteria assessed in reaching decisions. Personnel interviewed explained that little effort was made to document the criteria or standardize the process because communication between parties was effective. The U.S. Government Accountability Office's 2014 Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government require management to design control activities—policies, procedures, techniques, and mechanisms—to achieve objectives and address risk as well as to develop and maintain documentation of its internal control system. According to these standards, effective documentation establishes and communicates the who, what, when, where, and why of internal control execution. Lack of documented standard decision criteria risks undermining the objectivity of the risk management process, exposing mission and other U.S. Government employees to unnecessary and unwarranted risk.

Recommendation 7: Embassy Ankara should establish standardized decision criteria and documentation, approved by the Emergency Action Committee, for adjudicating requests to travel in southeastern Turkey. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

Advocacy and Analysis

Official Visit Support Undermines Diplomatic Engagement and Reporting

Mission Turkey assigned control officer duties, including logistics management, to officers in the Political, Economic, and Public Affairs Sections. The Visitors Unit at the embassy was responsible for organizing some logistical support for "VIP" travelers and delegations, whereas all programmatic and logistical support arrangements for "non-VIP" visitors rested with visit control officers. Because of regional events, routine and VIP official visits to Turkey's capital grew from 20 in 2012 to 150 in 2015, placing a burden on Department control officers at the expense of their core duties. Consulate General Istanbul did not have a Visitors Unit and assigned primary responsibility for logistics to its control officers. Consulate General Istanbul Political/Economic personnel stated that they spent as much as 50 percent of their time supporting both programmatic and logistical aspects of visits. According to 3 FAM 2614c, positions must be carefully planned and staffed to make the most effective use of human resources at the lowest practical expenditure to accomplish assigned duties. The absence of visitor support platforms at the embassy and consulate general to provide logistical support for all official visits risks misdirecting officer time from core responsibilities.

Recommendation 8: Embassy Ankara should assign responsibility for full logistical support for official visitors to Visitors Units at the embassy and at the consulate general. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

Untimely Reports

Mission Turkey did not transmit information key to foreign policy and national security decision making in a consistent, timely fashion. OIG found examples of time-sensitive information on regional political-military issues, bilateral relations, and meetings with host country leaders that the mission should have transmitted immediately but that were delayed by a week or longer. Embassy procedures required extensive clearances. Reporting cables on all but the most routine issues were reviewed by section chiefs and approved by the DCM or the Ambassador. OIG advised the mission to pursue faster transmission of reporting, including by delegating greater authority to section chiefs to release reporting.

Political Reporting on Target—Meets Washington’s Needs

OIG reviewed reporting cables from the 6 months preceding the inspection and found the Political Section provided a broad range of reporting that included regional political/military issues, domestic political developments, relations with third countries, and human rights. Washington consumers cited the coverage of the first of two parliamentary elections held in 2015 as rapid and informative. Unit chiefs made significant contributions to reporting, thereby modeling appropriate performance for other employees.

Economic Engagement—Strategic Planning Lacking

Washington consumers told OIG that they appreciated embassy reporting on energy, macroeconomics, and trade. OIG reviewed 6 months of economic cables and found that of five reporting officers, one mid-level officer performed more than 40 percent of reporting. The Economic Counselor and his deputy pursued competing views of the section’s priorities that affected the productivity of subordinates.

Mission Turkey’s economic engagement, outreach, and reporting was not coordinated or keyed to the achievement of ICS goals. The Economic Section did not develop or follow a reporting plan either for its own work or to coordinate the economic agenda with Consulate General Istanbul, which is located in the country’s business and financial center. Both the Foreign Commercial Service and the Foreign Agricultural Service offices reported good relations with, and support from, the Economic Section. The DCM chaired a regular embassy economic cluster meeting that included representatives from the Departments of State, Agriculture, and Commerce but did not include the Treasury Attaché. The cluster served to inform the Front Office but did not develop strategy or implement interagency coordination. According to 3 FAM 1214b, leaders must plan strategically. The absence of a strategic plan led the mission to devote insufficient priority to coordinated outreach, engagement, and reporting to advance its ICS economic goals.

Recommendation 9: Embassy Ankara should develop a strategy to advance the Integrated Country Strategy's economic goals through outreach, engagement, and reporting. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

Istanbul Lags in Reporting

Consulate General Istanbul took the lead reporting and advocacy role for Mission Turkey on religious freedom, minority rights, and press freedom, which the Ambassador and Department officials recognized and appreciated. Faced with an extended gap in an economic officer position, the section did not adjust portfolios and allowed its economic engagement and reporting to drop sharply. A review of 7 months of contact work and reporting by the Political/Economic Section showed that reporting officers averaged two meetings per week with outside contacts. Consulate General Istanbul allowed internal meetings and the pressure of multiple visits to interfere with the reporting and contact development required by 2 FAM 113.9. OIG advised the first-time Political/Economic Section chief to define priorities and assign resources to reflect the key issues in the consular district and to develop economic reporting priorities and coordinate them with Embassy Ankara, as well as with the Foreign Commercial Service. The consulate general provided OIG with a draft strategy near the end of the inspection.

Adana—Strong Reporting from Southeast Turkey

Reflecting its strategic location, Consulate Adana's reporting was weighted heavily toward political reports. OIG reviewed 27 reporting cables sent over a 7-month period; 24 addressed political topics, including refugees. At the time of the inspection, EUR and Embassy Ankara were finalizing creation of a new Economic Officer position that would also assume limited consular responsibilities. The new position should allow an increase in economic reporting, outreach, and engagement to contribute to the mission's economic strategy.

Leahy Vetting Process Corrected

The embassy's process for Leahy vetting⁹ had not been approved by the DCM or cleared by the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, as required by that bureau's Guide to Vetting Policy and Process. During the inspection, OIG advised the embassy to clear its process with the bureau, and the embassy did so. OIG also advised the embassy to identify replacements for the two vetting coordinators, both of whom were scheduled to depart in mid-2016.

⁹ The Leahy Amendment to the Foreign Assistance act of 1961 prohibits the Department of State from furnishing assistance to foreign security forces if the Department receives credible information that such forces have committed gross violations of human rights. See 22 USC 2378d.

Public Diplomacy

Strategic Public Diplomacy Focus

Mission Turkey's public diplomacy program focused on ICS goals, summarized in a Public Diplomacy Implementation Plan. The Public Affairs Officer in Ankara convened a country-wide off-site meeting in October 2015 that agreed on four priority lines of activity for FY 2016: countering violent extremism, promoting inclusion and diversity, freedom of speech and media, and strengthening shared values (through English-language and exchange programs). The Public Affairs Officer in Istanbul held brainstorming sessions with his full team to distill the national-level priorities into a program plan tailored to their consular district; the Public Affairs Officer in Adana pursued the lines of effort with an audience-driven approach that targeted youth and women in Southeastern Turkey.

Effective Grant Administration

U.S. direct-hire and LE staff members in all three Public Affairs Sections (PAS) consistently credited the LE grants coordinator in the Ankara PAS for responsive, hands-on guidance on all aspects of grants administration. In FY 2015, PAS awarded 136 grants. Of these, 60 were travel grants of \$100 or less. On the basis of Department guidelines, in FY 2016 the section shifted invitational travel payments to the Department's travel voucher system, removing a large administrative burden from the grants program. Excluding the small travel grants, the 71 remaining FY 2015 grants totaled almost \$1.3 million. OIG reviewed 17 of the 71 program grants awarded in FY 2015, representing 72 percent of the total dollars awarded and including all grants in excess of \$25,000. OIG provided advice on procedures to improve minor deficiencies in documentation and reporting.

Istanbul PAS Underperforming on Mission Priority Programming

With 3 American officers, 1 American professional associate, and 12 LE staff members, PAS Istanbul has a larger staff than 29 of the 45 public diplomacy sections at U.S. embassies in Europe. PAS Istanbul was responsible for only 4.5 percent of the FY 2015 country-wide grants program, as measured by dollars awarded, and 11 percent, as measured by number of grants, despite Istanbul's place as the largest city in Europe and Turkey's center of public life, culture, media, education, and commerce. Mission Turkey Public Affairs had strategic objectives keyed to the ICS but did not assign responsibilities for program implementation among its three locations. The Istanbul section had its own priority lines of action but did not emphasize grants as a tool to advance those goals. None of the four senior LE staff members in the PAS Istanbul cultural unit were certified as Grants Officer Representatives, notwithstanding their job description responsibilities "to plan, develop, coordinate, and execute Public Affairs programs." Department guidance (15 State 22048) requires these sections to administer grants funds to target audiences on priority mission-level strategic goals. Mission Turkey cannot achieve its national program agenda without grants programming in Istanbul that is proportionate to the city's importance.

Recommendation 10: Embassy Ankara should develop a country program plan to use grants to achieve mission strategic goals, including roles, responsibilities, and training for mission Public Affairs Sections. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

Istanbul Cultural Affairs Officer Position Improperly Classified

The work requirements for the Cultural Affairs Officer position in Istanbul exceeded the position standards for an FS-04, entry-level public diplomacy position. When the Department created the position in 2011, it assigned an FS-04 officer with the proviso that subsequent assignments would be at the FS-03 level. The responsibilities of the position corresponded to the Public Diplomacy Position Standards for an FS-02 level officer who serves "as a public affairs unit chief (i.e., cultural affairs or information officer) at a medium, large to exceptionally large post ... where the public affairs officer is at the FS-01 level or higher." The standards also specify that "the class of a cultural affairs officer or information officer should be set one class lower than that of the senior public diplomacy officer within the public diplomacy section." The PAO in Istanbul was graded at the FS-01 level. Placing an entry level officer in the Cultural Affairs Officer position as currently designed goes beyond offering a developmental opportunity and instead risks a less than fully successful performance by assigning responsibilities incommensurate with the officer's level of experience.

Recommendation 11: The Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, in coordination with the Bureau of Human Resources, should bring the rank of the Istanbul Cultural Affairs Officer into compliance with the National Security Decision Directive 38 process that created the position and the corresponding position standards. (Action: EUR, in coordination with DGHR)

Press Section Needs a Proactive Program Agenda

Istanbul is home to all of Turkey's national media outlets, and the Press Section has focused on expanding and diversifying contacts. To leverage those contacts, OIG encouraged Consulate Istanbul's six-person Press Section to develop programs to support ICS goals, including freedom of expression and increased capacity for independent media reporting and advocacy.

Close Poor Performing American Corners

Four of the five American Corners in Turkey failed to meet minimum Department standards for American Spaces. The four Corners (Bursa, Erzurum, Izmir, and Kayseri) were no longer useful as program partners because of diminished host institution support, inadequate facilities, or a lack of effective, dedicated staff. PAS established the American Corners beginning in 2003, and the conditions at each location changed over time. The Department formally listed the American Corner in Kayseri as closed effective March 14, 2016, while the inspection was underway. Department policy (15 State 132218) requires prioritizing resource allocation to a limited number of strategically important American Corners. A corner that fails to meet minimum standards of quality risks undermining the prestige of the U.S. Government and represents a poor return on continued resource investment.

Recommendation 12: Embassy Ankara, in coordination with the Bureau of International Information Programs, should terminate the American Corner designation of spaces in Bursa, Erzurum, and Izmir. (Action: Embassy Ankara, in coordination with IIP)

American Corner in Gaziantep Holds Promise

The Department designated as a priority the fifth American Corner, located in Gaziantep, citing its location in a sub-region of growing strategic importance for the United States and strong support from the host institution. PAS Turkey received \$234,260 from the Bureau of International Information Programs in FY 2015 to support the relocation, renovation, equipping, and staffing of this new American Corner—the largest grant/cooperative agreement PAS had awarded in the previous 3 years. OIG visited the site of the Gaziantep American Corner and reviewed documentation of mission oversight and monitoring of the early stages of the cooperative agreement. OIG found that the Gaziantep University memorandum of understanding is consistent with the description of an American Corner as defined in 10 FAM 364 and as such does not fall under physical security requirements for diplomatic facilities.

PAS Not Complying with Mandated Reporting

PAS Ankara had the fewest entries in the mandated Mission Activity Tracker database of any embassy in Europe. Section leadership acknowledged that internal reporting had not been a priority. The Department mandates (15 State 116406) that missions use the Mission Activity Tracker to capture data on public diplomacy activities for use in strategic analyses, reporting, and budgeting. Without systematic reporting and evaluation, public diplomacy managers cannot assess program effectiveness and incorporate that knowledge into decision making.

Recommendation 13: Embassy Ankara should track and measure Mission Turkey Public Diplomacy activities using the mandated Mission Activities Tracking database. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

Social Media: More Interactive Content Could Boost Followers

PAS Turkey managed multiple website and social media properties across its three locations, with four dedicated LE staff members and one who shared this role among other duties. Facebook was the most effective vehicle for broadly targeted content delivery and engagement. According to a Broadcasting Board of Governors analysis, social networks like Facebook were the third most common source for weekly news in Turkey; more than 70 percent of educated youth aged 15 to 24 were active social media users. At the end of 2015, the embassy Facebook site had 50,000 “likes”, Consulate General Istanbul had 26,000 “likes” and Consulate Adana had 11,000 “likes”, well below comparable U.S. missions. More interactive programming targeted to specific cohorts could boost engagement. When the mission mistakenly shared widely a limited invitation for an English-language teaching webinar, more than 700 university teachers signed up immediately, demonstrating the demand for targeted interactive digital programming.

Improving Public Diplomacy Programming

OIG also observed and discussed with Public Diplomacy managers issues relating to refugee programming, educational advising, and the Fulbright English Teaching Assistant program. With the sharp increase in programmatic engagement of Turkey's burgeoning Syrian refugee community, OIG advised the embassy to formalize coordination among the various sections, principally PAS, the mission refugee coordinator, and START. Turkey sent more students to the United States in 2015 than any European country except the United Kingdom and ranked thirteenth globally, but the number declined over the previous 5 years. Part-time staffing from the Fulbright Commission supported the mission's educational advising program, but with a focus on its own graduate-level programs. As a complement to PAS Ankara's plan to fund a dedicated advisor position at the Gaziantep American Corner—and its new public-private advising pilot model in Izmir—OIG encouraged PAS to explore with the relevant Department offices establishing a country-specific educational advising coordinator position. Turkey has the world's largest university-level Fulbright English Teaching Assistant program, with 104 young Americans deployed to 41 different public universities across the country. The program is a notable example of bilateral cooperation, but its rapid expansion has resulted in mixed experiences for the U.S. grantees. OIG advised the embassy to work with the Fulbright Commission to strengthen program oversight to ensure that each participant's experience is consistent with program goals and mutually agreed commitments.

Partnering on Outreach to Promote Turkey's role in the Summer Work Travel Program

The Public Affairs and Consular Sections in Istanbul collaborated on speaker and social media outreach, including a multi-pronged campaign to leverage outreach in Turkey, which is a leading source country for the Department's Summer Work Travel visa program. The outreach effort in January 2016 led to a 37-percent increase in "likes" on the Consulate's Facebook page and a 10-fold increase in online engagement. The Ambassador and the Consul General co-hosted a reception for Summer Work Travel alumni, a cohort of more than 68,000 people whose affinities with the United States represented a previously untapped resource for Mission Turkey engagement.

Adana Public Diplomacy Program Challenges

Consulate Adana's small PAS has neither the depth nor the experience of the sections in Ankara and Istanbul. PAS Adana awarded seven grants in each of the last 2 years, averaging about \$19,000 per grant. An additional seven FY 2015 grants originating in Ankara were, in whole or in part, for programs in the Adana consular district. Grantees in southeastern Turkey tended to be smaller and less experienced than elsewhere in Turkey, requiring substantial engagement by PAS staff members in all phases of development and implementation. OIG suggested that PAS Adana enroll one of its cultural affairs assistants in Grants Officer Representative training to strengthen grants administration. Increased temporary duty support by PAS personnel from Ankara and Istanbul, especially LE staff members, would boost PAS Adana's program

implementation capacity and also contribute to integration of the Mission Turkey public diplomacy platform.

Consular Affairs

In FY 2015, the embassy, 2 constituent posts, and 1 consular agency adjudicated 4,542 passport and consular report of birth applications and attended to U.S. citizen prisoners, including Americans detained by Turkish authorities while attempting to travel to conflict zones. Lack of timely access to these detained Americans, including presumed foreign terrorist fighters¹⁰, was an issue in consular relations. During the same period, Mission Turkey processed 6,298 immigrant visa applications and 130,231 nonimmigrant visa applications. The resident American citizen population numbered approximately 51,376, of whom about 750 were U.S. military dependents. The embassy estimated the number of U.S. citizen visitors in Turkey to be as high as 345,000 during the peak months for tourism.

Country Coordination

OIG examined coordination of consular operations in Turkey. The Ankara Consul General is the consular coordinator for the mission. He enhanced teamwork across different consular sections by using temporary duty support during staffing gaps to provide opportunities for American and Turkish staff members to work in and familiarize themselves with different locations. For example, when a computer server fire shut down operations in Istanbul for 3 weeks, he rotated 11 officers and staff members to Ankara and had Istanbul's visa appointments moved there, which enabled continuation of visa and passport processing. The Consul General designated functional country leads for nonimmigrant visas, immigrant visas, American Citizens Services, and fraud prevention. The functional leads hosted periodic workshops and video teleconference "normative meetings" to minimize differences, pass along trends, and ensure consistent processing and case handling.

American Citizens Services and Foreign Terrorist Fighters

The detention of American citizens attempting to transit Turkey to or from Syria posed a challenge for the mission. These cases ranged from journalists to U.S. citizens who wanted to fight in Syria on one side or another. Most of these cases arose in Consulate Adana's district; however, both the embassy and Consulate General Istanbul also provided assistance. OIG reviewed 4 of the 18 cases that occurred in 2015 and found that although some were quickly resolved, others went on for nearly a year and required ongoing effort by the Ankara American Citizen Services Unit for continuing communications with Turkish authorities, the Department, and other agencies in the mission. The Bureau of Consular Affairs and Ankara consular

¹⁰ United Nations Security Council Resolution 2178 defines "foreign terrorist fighters" as "individuals who travel to a State other than their States of residence or nationality for the purpose of the perpetration, planning, or preparation of, or participation in, terrorist acts or the providing or receiving of terrorist training, including in connection with armed conflict."

management noted that the Turkish Government did not always provide notification of the detention of Americans and often delayed consular access to detained U.S. citizens.

With limited consular resources, Consulate Adana did not have the capacity to provide ongoing American citizen services when an American was detained along the Turkish border. One Adana LE staff member worked full time on consular issues under the guidance of the sole management officer, who also held the consular portfolio on a part-time basis. During the course of the inspection, the Department designated a new economic officer position that will assume these part-time consular functions. The Bureau of Consular Affairs had previously upgraded the rank of the American Citizen Services chief position in Ankara and supplied additional travel money so that Ankara could support Adana. Although Embassy Ankara supplied a series of temporary duty consular officers, they were unfamiliar with the district or with key Adana consular contacts, limiting the effectiveness of this embassy support. According to 7 FAM 412, assisting American citizens detained abroad is one of the most important protection functions of a consular officer, and 7 FAM 415 notes that the arrest work is most efficiently carried out with advance planning and preparation.

Recommendation 14: Embassy Ankara should designate primary and back-up consular officers to support Adana's special consular services. (Embassy Ankara)

Ankara Consular Operations

Ankara's consular section adjudicated 44,416 nonimmigrant visas and 6,298 immigrant visas in FY 2015. OIG found that the consular section adjudicated nonimmigrant visas with minimal wait times for appointments. Immigrant visa appointments were also available with minimal delay for Turkish applicants.

Language a Major Constraint

Language issues complicated visa work in Ankara. Most nonimmigrant visa applicants were Turkish, although 10 percent were Iranian with smaller percentages of Iraqi, Syrian, and other third-country Arabic-speaking applicants. Ankara was one of three designated processing posts for Iranian immigrant visas, and approximately 60 percent of its immigrant visa interviews were conducted in Farsi. Visa adjudications in Ankara therefore required staff with Turkish-, Farsi-, and Arabic-language skills. Farsi-language capacity was a particular problem in the year preceding the inspection. At the time of the inspection, two Farsi-speaking LE staff positions had been vacant for 9 months because of resignations and lengthy delays in obtaining security clearances for replacements. The embassy transferred a Farsi-speaking consular officer to work as front office staff aide, and an officer assigned to a new Farsi language-designated immigrant visa chief position was unable to come to post.

Immigrant Visa: Iranian Case Backlog

The immigrant visa unit had a substantial backlog dating to May 2015 of Iranian cases, along with a few other non-Turkish nationalities. The National Visa Center estimated in March 2016 that it would take Ankara 145 work days to eliminate this backlog, the fourth longest backlog

worldwide. Despite both staffing gaps and a growing backlog, consular managers prioritized nonimmigrant visas over immigrant visas (for example, by scheduling immigrant visa interviews only 4 days a week). OIG advised consular managers of steps they could take to increase efficiency in both visa units. In March 2016, the Bureau of Consular Affairs sent a telegram (16 State 23958) instructing immigrant visa sections that “on occasion processing or other issues may prevent timely scheduling of all eligible applicants, but normally we expect such situations would not last more than [1] or [2] months.” The backlog in Ankara risked delaying family reunification and holding up immigrant employees for U.S. businesses.

Recommendation 15: Embassy Ankara, in coordination with the Bureau of Consular Affairs, should eliminate the current backlog of immigrant visa cases. (Action: Embassy Ankara, in coordination with CA).

Inadequate Non-immigrant Visa Case Notes and Adjudication Reviews

OIG examined 50 nonimmigrant visa applications from a 1-week period and observed visa interviewing. In preparing case notes in the automated visa system, officers used abbreviations and references that would not be understandable to system users outside of Turkey, such as officers at U.S. ports of entry. OIG suggested refresher training on writing appropriate case notes.

OIG examined nonimmigrant visa adjudication review statistics in the Consular Consolidated Database, which showed that consular supervisors in Ankara were not consistently reviewing the required 10 percent of visa issuances and 20 percent of visa denials specified in 9 FAM 403.9-2(D) and 9 FAM 403.10-3(D)(1). Although the Consul General frequently adjudicated nonimmigrant visas, his direct supervisor, the DCM, failed to conduct the required percentage of reviews. After OIG pointed this out, the DCM reviewed the Consul General’s adjudications for the previous 2 months and committed to continuing to do so.

Istanbul: An Effective Consular Section

OIG observed consular operations in Istanbul, examined files (including consular systems), and interviewed both American and LE staff members. OIG identified only minor areas where consular processes and management could be improved, such as aggregating all standard operating procedures into a single accessible location. In FY 2015, Istanbul’s visa unit adjudicated nearly 86,000 nonimmigrant visas, 66 percent of the mission total. The non-immigrant visa unit worked cooperatively with PAS on consular outreach related to the Summer Work Travel program and other consular priorities.

Inaccurate Position Descriptions Need Updating

Position descriptions for three LE staff members in the nonimmigrant visa unit were outdated and did not reflect their complex work on treaty trader and treaty investor visa applications. The section assigned new duties to these staff members in 2015 in order to improve processing of these cases but did not update the position descriptions or submit them for reclassification. According to 3 FAH-2 H-441.3, a new or revised description is needed whenever a material

change occurs in the duties, responsibilities, or organizational relationships of an existing position. As these three employees were doing more complex work than was reflected in their position descriptions, their position grades may have been incorrect. Supervisors evaluated these employees on the basis of incomplete and inaccurate list of duties, and therefore evaluations may have inaccurately reflected the work they had done.

Recommendation 16: Embassy Ankara should require Consulate General Istanbul to rewrite the position descriptions for the three members of the Istanbul treaty trader and treaty investor group and submit the rewritten position descriptions to the Frankfurt Regional Support Center for classification. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

Consular Agency Izmir

In 2005, the Consular Agency replaced an American Presence Post. Izmir is a busy port, and the consular district included several cruise ship ports of call. The Consular Agent assisted some of the thousands of American tourists who visited the area each year, as well as American citizen residents (including long-term residents, military retirees, and active-duty military and their family members). In FY 2015, the Consular Agent accepted 255 passport applications and 25 consular reports of birth applications. These represented 21 percent of the total passport applications processed by Ankara and 26 percent of the total consular reports of birth. The Consular Agent also handled 20 American citizen deaths (64 percent of the total death cases reported by Embassy Ankara), as well as 500 notarial services. In the absence of a Consular Agent, this work would have been done by Embassy Ankara.

Consular Agency Needs New Office

The lease on the Consular Agency is scheduled to expire on February 28, 2017. The lease was not subject to extension because the building did not meet seismic standards and the owner refused to extend the lease. Embassy Ankara worked without success for several years to find a commercial location for the agency. OIG found that Embassy Ankara had identified both short-term and permanent options for relocating the agency but had not concluded leases or agreements for either. The Foreign Service Buildings Act of 1926, as amended, authorizes the Secretary of State to acquire by purchase, construction, exchange, or lease sites and buildings in foreign cities for use by the diplomatic and consular establishments of the United States. With the lease expiration imminent, the Consular Agency would have to close temporarily in the absence of expeditious action by the embassy and the Department to relocate it. This would disrupt service to U.S. citizens living in or visiting the consular district and increase the workload of the consular section in Ankara.

Recommendation 17: The Bureau of Consular Affairs, in coordination with Embassy Ankara, the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, and the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, should conduct a cost-benefit analysis to determine the future of the Consular Agency in Izmir and a need to identify a replacement property prior to the expiration of the existing lease on February 28, 2017. (Action: CA, in coordination with Embassy Ankara, OBO, and DS)

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The Management Section of the embassy coordinated the provision of International Cooperative Administrative Support Services to Mission Turkey's customer base. The mission had a current memorandum of understanding for inter-post support, which defined the management support relationship between Embassy Ankara, Consulate General Istanbul, Consulate Adana, the EBO in Gaziantep, and Consular Agency Izmir.

In August 2015, a team from the Regional Support Center Frankfurt visited Consulate General Istanbul to review general services and other management operations. The Regional Support Center report alerted management to problems with procurement, finance, and property management processes, citing incidents of non-compliance with applicable regulations and need for training. OIG found that management had been working to address the issues raised by the Frankfurt team, but that progress had been slow. OIG advised both embassy and consulate general managers of a need for closer collaboration between their respective management units.

Labor Relations

LE Staff Challenges to Compensation Package

LE staff members challenged the Department's position that current LE wage rates were at the sixtieth market percentile of local comparators. The Department's 2011 wage freeze drove LE staff market position among comparators from the seventy-fifth percentile to an average level 22 percent below the fiftieth percentile. The Department increased wages in 2014 and 2015 with the goal of reaching the sixtieth percentile. Since 2013, the Department also increased wage rates at the lower end of the pay scale on three occasions to meet increases in the Turkish minimum wage. LE staff members also asserted that their wages did not reflect the unique requirements of mission employment, such as the security threat against U.S. facilities; the differences in labor markets and prevailing wage rates in Ankara, Istanbul, Adana, and Gaziantep; and the mission's English-language requirement. In May 2015, Mission Turkey requested a visit by the Office of Overseas Employment to address the full range of mission and LE staff concerns regarding the compensation package.

Merit Based Compensation Policy Handbook Outdated

The mission's 2013 Merit Based Compensation (MBC) Handbook was outdated and did not reflect mission-initiated changes to MBC policy. Mission management did not update the handbook to reflect policy changes it applied in the 2015 cycle. For example, mission management revised the Department's criteria for scoring performance and added narrative justification not required by the Department; raters and reviewers disclosed scores to employees prior to their review and certification; and MBC supervisors lowered LE staff performance scores in accordance with guidance from mission management rather than the handbook. According to

3 FAH-2 H-312a.(3)¹¹, management is responsible for keeping employees up to date on all changes in personnel policies and programs. Without an updated handbook, employees and supervisors may be unaware of changes in MBC policy.

Recommendation 18: Embassy Ankara should update its Merit Based Compensation Handbook. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

Financial Management

Accounting Unit Not Meeting Timeliness Standards

Embassy Ankara's Accounting Unit did not process obligations within 2 business days, as recommended by the Uniform Service Standard 6221, and did not review rejected transactions in a timely manner. The Financial Management Office experienced consecutive vacancies, inexperienced new hires, and an increase in visitor workload, which contributed to the delays. OIG advised financial management staff to review and record all disbursements and related financial reports in a timely manner, as required by 4 FAM 251.7

Prompt Payment Fees Not Paid

The mission did not pay interest fees on payments made after invoice due dates. Consulate General Istanbul alerted vendors to expect to receive payments after the due dates, but Embassy Ankara did not implement procedures for calculating the fees. According to 4 FAH-3 H-311.5a, agencies are required to pay their bills on time and to pay interest penalties when payments are late. By not paying late payment interest fees, the mission was in violation of the Prompt Payment Act, an internal control for ensuring vendors are paid in a timely manner.

Recommendation 19: Embassy Ankara should pay Prompt Payment Act interest fees on late payments. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

Bank Account Not Reconciled

Consulate General Istanbul had not reconciled a commercial bank account used to pay utility bills since it opened the account in 2011. Starting in November 2015, consulate management dedicated additional staff resources to the reconciliation process, although it had yet to be completed at the time of the inspection.

Cashier Provided Personal Banking Functions for Employees

The Consulate General Istanbul cashier authorized deposits by U.S. direct-hire employees into a consulate general bank account for the payment of personally owned vehicle registration, insurance, and license plate fees. Consulate general staff told OIG this was a convenience for U.S. direct-hire employees. According to 4 FAH-3 H-393.3-4.f, cashiers are prohibited from

¹¹ Citation updated by Department as of 6/9/2016 to 3 FAH-2H-312b.(3)

performing personal banking functions for individuals. Authorizing personal use of the consulate's account risks creating the appearance of a misuse of Government resources and is beyond the authorized scope of cashier responsibilities.

Recommendation 20: Embassy Ankara should instruct Consulate General Istanbul to discontinue transferring employees' personal payments through official bank accounts. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

Consulate Adana Cashier Providing Accommodation Exchange

Consulate Adana was providing accommodation exchange services although approximately 10 automated teller machines were within 1 kilometer of the facility. Consulate management told OIG that they provided the service because the commercial bank refused to install an automated teller machine on the compound because of the small number of customers. According to 4 FAH-3 H-361.2a, a chief of mission determination is required regarding the provision of accommodation exchange services based on the availability of U.S.-owned foreign currency in the country and satisfactory local banking and automated teller machine facilities. Accommodation exchange increases the amount of the cashier advance and creates greater risk of receiving an uncollectible check.

Recommendation 21: Embassy Ankara should require Consulate Adana to discontinue providing accommodation exchange services. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

General Services Operations

Embassy Lacked an Acquisition Plan

Mission Turkey did not have an annual acquisition plan. Mission management did not seek input from embassy sections to forecast contracting opportunities during the fiscal year. For example, Consulate General Istanbul did not establish service contracts or indefinite-delivery/indefinite-quantity contracts for its repetitive services, thus resulting in a low competition rating for FY 2015. Federal Acquisition Regulation 7.102 (a), requires acquisition planning and market research to be performed for all acquisitions. Without an annual acquisition plan, the mission cannot carry out market research to determine optimal contracting methods, increase competition, or provide cost savings. During the inspection, mission management initiated a procurement planning process for FY 2016.

Ankara Residences Did Not Meet Safety Standards

Embassy Ankara residences did not meet occupational safety and health standards. According to mission management, residences did not meet standards because none of the residences had a ground fault circuit interrupter. In addition, OIG reviewed 18 of 166 residential lease files and found that only 1 had the required Post Occupational Safety and Health Officer certification. According to 15 FAM 252.5a, no employee may occupy a U.S. Government-owned or -leased residence until all safety, health, and environmental hazards are effectively controlled or

eliminated. The lack of a Post Occupational Safety and Health Officer certification puts U.S. direct-hire staff members and their families at risk.

Recommendation 22: Embassy Ankara should bring all Mission Turkey residences into compliance with Post Occupational Safety Health standards. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

Incomplete or Outdated Residential Security Surveys

Consulate General Istanbul residential security surveys were out of date or incomplete. The Regional Security Office gave lower priority to residential security than to other projects. OIG reviewed 10 of 69 residential lease files and determined that 70 percent did not include RSO surveys. According to 15 FAM 252.4a, the RSO must conduct residential security surveys on all residential properties that may be occupied by U.S. personnel. Without a survey, the RSO cannot identify and mitigate security vulnerabilities that put U.S. personnel at risk.

Recommendation 23: Embassy Ankara should require Consulate General Istanbul to complete all required residential security surveys. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

Mission Drivers Exceeded Limits on Hours

Drivers throughout the mission regularly exceeded limits on working hours. Motor pool management did not assign alternate drivers to cover overtime. The Motor Vehicle Safety Management Program and the mission motor pool operations policy require that drivers not perform more than 10 hours on duty each day. In 14 State 26482, the Department granted an exception allowing drivers to use a 12-hour alternating work schedule. However, the mission was not in compliance with this exception because drivers working a 12-hour shift sometimes worked the following day. Failure to limit vehicle operator duty hours increases the risk of motor vehicle mishaps.

Recommendation 24: Embassy Ankara should require all Mission Turkey motor pools to comply with the Department's Motor Vehicle Safety Management Program policy on vehicle operator duty limits. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

Contracting Officer's Representative Files Incomplete

Mission Contracting Officer's Representative files were incomplete. OIG reviewed all Contracting Officer's Representative files and found 6 of 11 files were incomplete at Embassy Ankara, 1 of 7 was incomplete at Consulate General Istanbul, and all 8 of Consulate Adana's files were incomplete. Of the mission's nine Contracting Officer's Representatives, three had not received required training while three others did not make it a priority to complete their files. According to 14 FAH-2 H-517a, Contracting Officer's Representatives are required to set up and maintain a file for each contract under their administration. Inadequate contract oversight represents a risk for monitoring and documenting contractors' technical progress and expenditures of resources.

Recommendation 25: Embassy Ankara should require all mission Contracting Officer's Representatives to maintain required files. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

Contract Files Incomplete at Consulate Adana

Contract files processed by Consulate Adana were incomplete. OIG reviewed all four FY 2015 contract files and identified missing documentation, including records of competition, Contracting Officer's Representative designations, and notices of award. The Contracting Officer did not conduct reviews to ensure that all files were completed in accordance with Federal Acquisition Regulations 4.801 (a), which requires the head of each contracting office to establish files containing records of contractual actions. An incomplete contract file provides no basis for assessing whether awarded contracts complied with federal acquisition regulations.

Recommendation 26: Embassy Ankara should require Consulate Adana to establish internal controls to bring procurement files into compliance with Federal Acquisition Regulations and Department requirements. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

General Services Office is the Designated Billing Office

Consulate General Istanbul's General Services Office was the designated billing office. Consulate management told OIG that vendor payment delays were a result of understaffing in the Financial Management Section, which justified assigning the General Services Office to receive invoices. Department guidance (13 State 57938) requires that the Financial Management Office be identified as the designated billing office for contracts, purchase orders, and purchase card invoices. The receipt of invoices by the General Services Office does not allow for the appropriate separation of duties between the ordering, receiving, billing, approval, and payment processes.

Recommendation 27: Embassy Ankara should require Consulate General Istanbul to assign the designated billing office function to its Financial Management Office. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

Property Management Duties Not Segregated

One employee in Consulate General Istanbul's procurement section was responsible for property receiving, record keeping, and inventory. The accountable property officer did not redelegate these responsibilities to other individuals in the General Services Section in order to separate the functions. In Adana, the procurement supervisor also was responsible for the annual inventory process. Adana's general services staff was minimal, and the accountable property officer did not separate these functions. Consulate Adana reported a 5.02-percent shortage in non-expendable property, which exceeds the Department's 1-percent threshold. According to 14 FAH-1 H-112.2j, the accountable property officer is required to establish a management control system that ensures no one individual is in the position to control all aspects of any transaction affecting the acquisition, receipt, record keeping, or disposition of expendable or non-expendable property. Failure to separate property from procurement functions increases the risk of waste, fraud, and mismanagement.

Recommendation 28: Embassy Ankara should require Consulate General Istanbul and Consulate Adana to establish standard operating procedures to maintain separation of duties among staff members in procurement and property. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

Information Resource Management

Mission Turkey Information Resource Management programs included extensive classified and sensitive computer networks, dedicated internet networks, radio and telephone systems, diplomatic post office and mail, classified and unclassified pouch, mobile computing, records management, and contingency operations that supported almost 1,100 permanently assigned and temporary duty personnel.

The Information Management Officer provided strategic direction through daily dialog with his key staff in Ankara and with the Information Programs Officers in Istanbul and Adana. However, information resource management support across the mission was inconsistent. Consulate Adana's and Consulate General Istanbul's Information Resources Sections were struggling to meet service needs. OIG advised the Information Management Officer to be more proactive in providing temporary duty support to the consulates from Ankara and in requesting temporary duty support from the Department.

EBO Information Systems Security

During the inspection, an embassy information systems security officer reviewed the EBO dedicated internet network security controls and tested the emergency and evacuation radio system. He determined that network drives included personally identifiable information as well as START documents, contrary to authorized use. The START management officer removed all documents from the system and reminded staff members using the EBO of correct cybersecurity practices.

Computer Systems

OIG reviewed systems and operations for compliance with standard operating environment and cybersecurity controls, appropriate maintenance activity, device accountability, and user training and support. Although the LE and U.S. direct-hire staff maintained day-to-day computer services availability and customer support, the Information Systems Security Officer did not conduct systematic analysis of audit logs, user libraries, emails, workstations, and servers for indications of inappropriate or unusual activity, as required by 12 FAM 613.4. The mission corrected this deficiency and instituted daily checks.

In 2015, an after-hours computer room fire at Consulate General Istanbul damaged all servers and network devices. The Department responded quickly and effectively to provide the technical staff to install new equipment. Data recovery was almost complete at the time of this inspection, validating the contingency plan for off-shore data back-up and restoration.

Records Management

With the exception of the electronic filing structure in Ankara's Political Section, an OIG examination of electronic and paper files demonstrated that most employees stored official records¹² in electronic shared drive folders or in personal folders that were not organized in logical, structured, or hierarchical filing systems. The Information Resource Management Section had circulated guidance on file organization, but the mission had not enforced a policy on records management. Both 5 FAM 400 and 5 FAH-4 H-210 detail the Department's standards and requirements for records management and organization. Lack of records management risks vulnerabilities to information loss over time or in the event of a disaster.

Recommendation 29: Embassy Ankara should require offices to manage records in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

State Messaging and Archive Retrieval Toolset Record Email

With the exception of the Turkey Daily Note prepared by the Ankara Political Section, mission staff members did not regularly use the record email function of the State Messaging and Archive Retrieval Toolset software system to preserve official records. The mission did not prioritize requiring consistent use of record email. Specific guidance on use of the record email feature is contained in 5 FAM 1214.3. Failure to use record email risks loss of records that document mission functions, policies, decisions, procedures, and essential transactions.

Recommendation 30: Embassy Ankara should require mission sections to use the State Messaging and Archive Retrieval Toolset application to archive email and other official electronic correspondence. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

¹² Pursuant to 44 U.S.C. 3301, official records include all recorded information, regardless of form or characteristics, made or received by a Federal agency under Federal law or in connection with the transaction of public business and preserved or appropriate for preservation by that agency or its legitimate successor as evidence of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, or other activities of the U.S Government or because of the informational value of data in them.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: Embassy Ankara should document and preserve ambassadorial email communication in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

Recommendation 2: Embassy Ankara should require that Mission Turkey Emergency Action Committees review and report on decision points when these committees meet. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

Recommendation 3: The Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, in coordination with the Bureau of Consular Affairs and the Bureau of Human Resources, should establish a consular/staff aide rotational position. (Action: EUR, in coordination with CA and DGHR)

Recommendation 4: The Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, in coordination with Embassy Ankara, should incorporate independent monitoring into all its high-risk Syria Transition Assistance Response Team-related programs implemented from Turkey. (Action: NEA, in coordination with Embassy Ankara)

Recommendation 5: The Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, in coordination with the Bureau of Administration, should reduce the Department's processing times for vetting potential assistance recipients and program personnel to conform with the Quadrennial Diplomatic and Development Review mandate to standardize Department and U.S. Agency for International Development risk management and mitigation. (Action: NEA, in coordination with A)

Recommendation 6: Embassy Ankara should designate the Deputy Chief of Mission to have general oversight of the Embassy Branch Office, including authority to designate an on-site officer in charge of the Embassy Branch Office whenever temporary duty personnel are present. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

Recommendation 7: Embassy Ankara should establish standardized decision criteria and documentation, approved by the Emergency Action Committee, for adjudicating requests to travel in southeastern Turkey. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

Recommendation 8: Embassy Ankara should assign responsibility for full logistical support for official visitors to Visitors Units at the embassy and at the consulate general. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

Recommendation 9: Embassy Ankara should develop a strategy to advance the Integrated Country Strategy's economic goals through outreach, engagement, and reporting. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

Recommendation 10: Embassy Ankara should develop a country program plan to use grants to achieve mission strategic goals, including roles, responsibilities, and training for mission Public Affairs Sections. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

Recommendation 11: The Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, in coordination with the Bureau of Human Resources, should bring the rank of the Istanbul Cultural Affairs Officer into compliance with the National Security Decision Directive 38 process that created the position and the corresponding position standards. (Action: EUR, in coordination with DGHR)

Recommendation 12: Embassy Ankara, in coordination with the Bureau of International Information Programs, should terminate the American Corner designation of spaces in Bursa, Erzurum, and Izmir. (Action: Embassy Ankara, in coordination with IIP)

Recommendation 13: Embassy Ankara should track and measure Mission Turkey Public Diplomacy activities using the mandated Mission Activities Tracking data base. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

Recommendation 14: Embassy Ankara should designate primary and back-up consular officers to support Adana's special consular services. (Embassy Ankara)

Recommendation 15: Embassy Ankara, in coordination with the Bureau of Consular Affairs, should eliminate the current backlog of immigrant visa cases. (Action: Embassy Ankara, in coordination with CA).

Recommendation 16: Embassy Ankara should require Consulate General Istanbul to rewrite the position descriptions for the three members of the Istanbul treaty trader and treaty investor group and submit the rewritten position descriptions to the Frankfurt Regional Support Center for classification. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

Recommendation 17: The Bureau of Consular Affairs, in coordination with Embassy Ankara, the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, and the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, should conduct a cost-benefit analysis to determine the future of the Consular Agency in Izmir and a need to identify a replacement property prior to the expiration of the existing lease on February 28, 2017. (Action: CA, in coordination with Embassy Ankara, OBO, and DS)

Recommendation 18: Embassy Ankara should update its Merit Based Compensation Handbook. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

Recommendation 19: Embassy Ankara should pay Prompt Payment Act interest fees on late payments. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

Recommendation 20: Embassy Ankara should instruct Consulate General Istanbul to discontinue transferring employees' personal payments through official bank accounts. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

Recommendation 21: Embassy Ankara should require Consulate Adana to discontinue providing accommodation exchange services. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

Recommendation 22: Embassy Ankara should bring all Mission Turkey residences into compliance with Post Occupational Safety Health standards. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

Recommendation 23: Embassy Ankara should require Consulate General Istanbul to complete all required residential security surveys. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

Recommendation 24: Embassy Ankara should require all Mission Turkey motor pools to comply with the Department's Motor Vehicle Safety Management Program policy on vehicle operator duty limits. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

Recommendation 25: Embassy Ankara should require all mission Contracting Officer's Representatives to maintain required files. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

Recommendation 26: Embassy Ankara should require Consulate Adana to establish internal controls to bring procurement files into compliance with Federal Acquisition Regulations and Department requirements. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

Recommendation 27: Embassy Ankara should require Consulate General Istanbul to assign the designated billing office function to its Financial Management Office. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

Recommendation 28: Embassy Ankara should require Consulate General Istanbul and Consulate Adana to establish standard operating procedures to maintain separation of duties among staff members in procurement and property. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

Recommendation 29: Embassy Ankara should require offices to manage records in accordance with Department standards. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

Recommendation 30: Embassy Ankara should require mission sections to use the State Messaging and Archive Retrieval Toolset application to archive email and other official electronic correspondence. (Action: Embassy Ankara)

PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS

| Title | Name | Arrival Date |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------|
| Chiefs of Mission: | | |
| Ambassador | John R. Bass | 10/2014 |
| Deputy Chief of Mission | Lawrence C. Mandel | 07/2014 |
| Constituent Posts: | | |
| Consulate Adana | Linda S. Specht | 08/2015 |
| Consulate General Istanbul | Charles F. Hunter | 09/2013 |
| Chiefs of Sections: | | |
| Management | Sarah C. Hall | 09/2013 |
| Consular | Patrick W. Walsh | 07/2014 |
| Political | Justin P. Friedman | 07/2014 |
| Economic | James J. Turner | 08/2013 |
| Public Affairs | Jonathan Henick | 08/2014 |
| Regional Affairs | Scott R. Wright | 08/2014 |
| Regional Security | Donald F. Jurczyk | 06/2014 |
| START | Mark S. Ward | 01/2014 |
| Other Agencies: | | |
| Foreign Agricultural Service | Kimberly S. Sawatzki | 08/2013 |
| Foreign Commercial Service | Robert Farris | 09/2014 |
| Department of Defense | BGEN Marc H. Sasseville | 04/2014 |
| Office of Defense Cooperation | CAPT Joseph W. Piontek | 07/2013 |
| Department of the Treasury | William D. Block | 01/2016 |
| Customs and Border Protection | Douglas J. Fitzpatrick | 08/2012 |
| Drug Enforcement Agency | Daniel G. Moore | 08/2013 |
| Federal Bureau of Investigations | Michael R. Hickok | 06/2015 |
| Department of Justice | John C. Engstrom | 08/2013 |

APPENDIX A: PURPOSE, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

This inspection was conducted in accordance with the Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation, as issued in 2012 by the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency, and the Inspector's Handbook, as issued by OIG for the Department and the Broadcasting Board of Governors.

Purpose and Scope

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

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

Methodology

In conducting inspections, OIG reviews pertinent records; as appropriate, circulates, reviews, and compiles the results of survey instruments; conducts onsite interviews; and reviews the substance of the report and its findings and recommendations with offices, individuals, organizations, and activities affected by the review.

For this inspection, OIG conducted 111 documented interviews in Washington, DC, and 424 in Ankara, Istanbul, Adana, Izmir, and Gaziantep, Turkey. OIG reviewed 623 surveys from the embassy and consulates and approximately 2,000 other documents.

APPENDIX B: FY 2015 STAFFING AND FUNDING BY AGENCY

| Agency | U.S. Direct-hire Staff | U.S. Locally Employed Staff | Foreign National Staff | Total Staff ^a | Funding (\$) |
|--|------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Department of State | | | | | |
| Diplomatic & Consular Programs | 115 | 18 | 83 | 216 | 7,242,500 |
| <i>Ankara</i> | 65 | 7 | 43 | 115 | |
| <i>Istanbul</i> | 36 | 7 | 34 | 77 | |
| <i>Adana</i> | 13 | 4 | 6 | 23 | |
| <i>Izmir</i> | 1 | - | - | 1 | |
| International Cooperative Administrative Support Services | 17 | 41 | 219 | 277 | 18,732,200 |
| <i>Ankara</i> | 12 | 30 | 128 | 170 | |
| <i>Istanbul</i> | 4 | 9 | 70 | 83 | |
| <i>Adana</i> | 1 | 2 | 21 | 24 | |
| Public Diplomacy | 10 | 1 | 35 | 46 | 3,547,995 |
| <i>Ankara</i> | 6 | - | 20 | 26 | |
| <i>Istanbul</i> | 3 | 1 | 12 | 16 | |
| <i>Adana</i> | 1 | - | 3 | 4 | |
| Diplomatic Security | 16 | 4 | 422 | 442 | 16,713,665 |
| <i>Ankara</i> | 9 | 1 | 238 | 250 | |
| <i>Istanbul</i> | 5 | - | 104 | 109 | |
| <i>Adana</i> | 2 | 1 | 80 | 83 | |
| Marine Security | 27 | - - | | 27 | |
| <i>Ankara</i> | 10 | - | - | 10 | |
| <i>Istanbul</i> | 9 | - | - | 9 | |
| <i>Adana</i> | 8 | - | - | 8 | |
| Representation | | | | | 96,600 |
| | | | | | 46,332,960 |
| START <i>(Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs Only)</i> | | | | | 913,742 |
| Department of State | 16 | 2 | 37 | 55 | |

| Agency | | U.S. | | | Total Staff ^a | Funding (\$) |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| | | U.S. Direct-hire Staff | Locally Employed Staff | Foreign National Staff | | |
| | <i>Ankara</i> | 6 | 1 | 30 | 37 | |
| | <i>Istanbul</i> | 8 | 1 | 2 | 11 | |
| - | <i>Adana</i> | 2 | - | 5 | 7 | |
| USAID | | 5 | 5 | - | 10 | |
| | <i>Ankara</i> | 1 | 3 | - | 4 | |
| | <i>Istanbul</i> | - | 2 | - | 2 | |
| | <i>Adana</i> | 4 | - | - | 4 | |
| Subtotal | | 21 | 7 | 37 | 65 | 913,742 |
| Department of Agriculture | | | | | | 627,507 |
| Foreign Agriculture Service | | 2 | - | 6 | 8 | |
| | <i>Ankara</i> | 2 | - | 4 | 6 | |
| | <i>Istanbul</i> | - | - | 2 | 2 | |
| Department of Commerce | | | | | | 1,629,240 |
| Foreign Commercial Service | | 5 | - | 14 | 19 | |
| | <i>Ankara</i> | 3 | - | 6 | 9 | |
| | <i>Istanbul</i> | 2 | - | 6 | 8 | |
| | <i>Izmir</i> | - | - | 2 | 2 | |
| Department of Defense | | | | | | 807,454 |
| | | | | <i>(DAO only)</i> | | |
| Defense Attaché Office | | 38 | - | 5 | 43 | |
| | <i>Ankara</i> | 31 | - | 5 | 36 | |
| | <i>Istanbul</i> | 5 | - | - | 5 | |
| Defense Contract Management Agency | <i>(Ankara only)</i> | 1 | - | - | 1 | |
| Office of Defense Cooperation | <i>(Ankara only)</i> | | | | | |
| Subtotal | | 40 | | 5 | 45 | 807,454 |
| Department of Justice | | | | | | unknown |
| Drug Enforcement Administration | | 18 | - | 8 | 26 | |
| | <i>Ankara</i> | 12 | - | 4 | 16 | |
| | <i>Istanbul</i> | 6 | - | 4 | 10 | |

| Agency | U.S. Locally | | | Total Staff ^a | Funding (\$) |
|---|----------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| | U.S. Direct- hire Staff | Employed Staff | Foreign National Staff | | |
| Legal Attache's Office | 4 | - | - | 4 | |
| <i>Ankara</i> | 3 | - | - | 3 | |
| <i>Istanbul</i> | 1 | - | - | 1 | |
| Regional Legal Advisor <i>(Ankara only)</i> | 1 | - | 1 | 2 | |
| Subtotal | 23 | | 9 | 32 | |
| Department of Homeland Security | | | | | unknown |
| Customs and Border Protection <i>(Ankara only)</i> | 2 | - | 2 | 4 | |
| Open Source Center <i>(Ankara only)</i> | - | - | 2 | 2 | unknown |
| Total | 276 | 71 | 834 | 1,181 | 50,310,903 |

Source: Embassy Ankara

ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|------------|---|
| DCM | Deputy Chief of Mission |
| Department | Department of State |
| EAC | Emergency Action Committee |
| EBO | Embassy Branch Office |
| EUR | Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs |
| FAH | Foreign Affairs Handbook |
| FAM | Foreign Affairs Manual |
| ICS | Integrated Country Strategy |
| LE | Locally Employed |
| MBC | Merit Based Compensation |
| NEA | Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs |
| PAS | Public Affairs Section |
| RSO | Regional Security Officer |
| START | Syria Transition Assistance Response Team |
| USAID | U.S. Agency for International Development |

OIG INSPECTION TEAM MEMBERS

Gene Christy, Team Leader

Seth Winnick, Deputy Team Leader

David Bocskor

Jefferson Brown

Marc Desjardins

Jonathan Farrar

Hanane Grini

John Milkiewicz

Patricia Murphy

James Norton

Shawn O'Reilly

Keith Powell

Charles Rowcliffe

Randy Smith

Alexandra Vega

Steven White



HELP FIGHT

FRAUD. WASTE. ABUSE.

1-800-409-9926

OIG.state.gov/HOTLINE

If you fear reprisal, contact the
OIG Whistleblower Ombudsman to learn more about your rights:

OIGWPEAOmbuds@state.gov

oig.state.gov

Office of Inspector General • U.S. Department of State • P.O. Box 9778 • Arlington, VA 22219

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~