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AUDIT
OF
THE CANADIAN HIGH COMMISSION

LUSAKA

AUGUST, 2001

Audit Division (SIV)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An audit of Administration and Consular Programs at the Canadian High Commission in Lusaka was carried out on February 26 and 27, 2001. The General Relations and IBD Programs were not audited. The Mission was previously audited in 1995. This audit was done concurrently with an audit in Harare.

MISSION MANAGEMENT

The Mission is well led by an experienced Head of Mission (HOM). Responsibility for Malawi adds to the complexity of a difficult operating environment in which the Mission works. Morale is high at the Mission, with good communications ensured by regular meetings and daily interaction.

An improvement of accountability could be achieved by extending downwards, to the Program Managers, the Performance Agreement the HOM has with the Africa Bureau.

CONSULAR PROGRAM

The Consular Program is managed effectively. While passport demand is moderate, Consular cases can be complicated due to local bureaucracy and the extensive territory the Mission covers. A new junior Consular Assistant position was added that will be staffed soon, which will allow for a better distribution of the Consular workload.

ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM

A Management Consular Officer (MCO) position transferred from Harare in the summer of 2000 has had a positive effect on Mission Administration. *** although a lack of formal planning is evident.

A number of Human Resources issues must be dealt with by the new MCO, including the creation of individual LES files, updating job descriptions and reviewing pension and other benefits. The Chancery is far too large for current or anticipated future needs and the Mission should explore alternatives.

MISSION MANAGEMENT

1.1 Overview

1.1.1 The Mission is managed by an experienced HOM, assisted by a Third Secretary and Consul who is responsible for the General Relations, IBD and Immigration Programs, and a MCO. The HOM supports all Programs in a very active manner, and has a keen interest in both the Administration and the Consular Programs. Weekly meetings include all CBS and LES. This forum encourages open and frank exchanges and commentary from staff of each Program, and is viewed as a very positive aspect of Mission management. The HOM has a performance document with the Africa Bureau (GGD) which could be extended downwards to Program Managers. This more formal agreement on goals and milestones, subject to periodic review as required, helps ensure all Programs are more synchronized in their approach to Mission Program delivery.

Recommendation for the Mission

1.1.2 **Develop an accountability agreement between the HOM and the Program Managers.**

Mission Response

1.1.2 **We will work on having agreements in place before the current High Commissioner's departure summer 2001.**

Hub and Spoke

1.1.3 Harare was the Hub Mission for many aspects of the Administration Program up until the AS position was transferred in the summer of 2000. Currently, the only Hub functions performed relate to the inputting of financial data into IMS. The Hub and Spoke relationship will cease entirely early in the new fiscal year when Lusaka gets full IMS access.

CONSULAR PROGRAM

2.1 Management of the Program

2.1.1 The MCO manages the Consular Program, assisted by one Visa/Consular Assistant (LE-06) and a new Consular Assistant position (LE-05), yet to be staffed. The Consular caseload cannot be ascertained as COMIP logs have not been submitted since January 1998. ROCA records are regularly updated.

Recommendation for the Mission

2.1.2 Update and maintain COMIP reports. If possible, compile past missing reports.

Mission Response

2.1.2 We will update and maintain COMIP reports.

New Consular Assistant Position

2.1.3 A new Consular Assistant (LE-05) position was approved and funded by HQ in 2000, but the Mission has yet to staff it. The MCO wants to assess the workload before submitting a final job description to HRL. The position is expected to be staffed as of April 1, 2001, which will permit training and orientation to take place in advance of the visa high season beginning in May.

2.1.4 The Visa/Consular Assistant is a Canadian who has been with the Mission for less than one year. She is spending approximately 60 percent of her time on Immigration work, 30 percent of her time on Consular, and the balance on SIGNET Support Assistant duties. It is expected that the new position will permit the Visa/Consular Assistant, a CIC "fenced" employee, to focus more on Immigration issues and files. This will reduce or even eliminate the overtime she works in the peak of the visa season.

Recommendation for the Mission

2.1.5 Finalize the new Consular Assistant position job description and submit it for classification.

Mission Response

2.1.5 The job description for the new position has been finalized and has been submitted for classification. We shall proceed with staffing action as soon as we hear from HQ.

2.2 Services to Canadian Citizens

2.2.1 The Mission is responsible for providing Consular Services to Canadians in Zambia and Malawi. Consular demand is moderate, but steady. Emergency procedures after hours are well laid out in a deskbook, entitled "After Hours Emergency Procedures - Canadian High Commission, Lusaka". This permits any employee to easily find the correct procedure or action to take in the absence of a Consular Program employee. The after-hours direct dial system is used for calls made for Consular services and very few complaints have been received by the Mission regarding this service. ROCA records indicate 487 registered Canadians in Zambia, and 388 registered in Malawi.

Mission Comment

With reference to the after-hours direct dial system for emergencies, we wish to place on record (again) our view that we have been fortunate that only a few complaints have been received, since the voice messaging system has not worked properly in at least three years and probably longer than that. It is erratic at best and callers after hours often get no answer at all. We understand that plans exist to upgrade/change the system, but to date have no indication as to when that might be. Note that ROCA records include persons who have, in fact, left the country. We estimate the actual number of Canadians to be about 30 or 40% or more lower and will be following up to ensure that the list is more accurate.

2.3 Passports

2.3.1 The process of passport preparation and issuance is well managed. The label printer is located in a secure cabinet. The working supply of passports and labels is appropriately stored. Time constraints did not permit the reconciliation of the passport and labels on hand to the inventory report from HQ, but the Mission verifies the inventories monthly as required. At last count, all was in order. Cash is properly stored.

2.3.2 The published passport issuance standard is ten working days, but generally the passports are ready within five working days. The Visa/Consular

Assistant commented that during the summer, when the demand for visitor visas increases, passport service is somewhat slower but still within the standard.

2.3.3 The number of passports issued over the past twelve months was 93. A zero error rate and good passport examination knowledge has been reported by the Passport Office.

2.4 Honorary Consul

2.4.1 The Honorary Consul is located in Blantyre, Malawi. The Mission indicates that service to Canadians is very good, and the Honorary Consul covers the country effectively by maintaining contacts in various towns. He does some political reporting as well. Expenses claimed against the operation appear modest and reasonable, with a total annual cost of just over \$20,000. The supporting documentation attached to expense claims is complete.

2.5 Admission to Canada

2.5.1 The Third Secretary and Consul oversees the Immigration Program. This occupies 30 percent of his time. A working supply of blank visas and the bulk of the stock are properly stored. Time constraints did not permit a reconciliation of the supply of visas on hand to the inventory records.

ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM

3.1 Management of the Program

3.1.1 The operating environment is demanding and with the addition of an MCO the Mission is able to better spread the workload and respond more rapidly to demands in the area of Administration. Prior to the MCO, many routine Administration tasks were not completed, particularly in the area of the Human Resources management.

3.1.2 Lusaka is a Spoke of Harare and this relationship has worked quite well in the past. Now, with the exception of financial data input, the Hub and Spoke relationship has ceased. The current plan is to connect the Mission to IMS so that Lusaka can do its own IMS input. This will end the Hub and Spoke relationship with Harare, and Lusaka will be a “stand-alone” Mission.

3.1.3 The MCO position is occupied by a non-rotational AS-03 who is on a single assignment, his first overseas. *** He has the full support of the High Commissioner, with whom he communicates regularly, and has been well received by the LES.

3.1.4 CBS report they are receiving good service from the Administration Section. The idea of devising and circulating basic service standards for Administration could be explored by the MCO. While such a small Mission does not need an extensive package detailing Administration services and time-lines, a document outlining what is offered, at what hours and by which employees would be useful for all employees of the Mission.

3.1.5 There are a number of items requiring attention. To date, the MCO has made good progress, and has a very good idea of what needs to be accomplished. However, aside from a “To Do” list, there is an absence of any formal planning. A workplan document can help the MCO avoid becoming too reactive to Administration demands. The same information can be included in an accountability document with the HOM.

Recommendations for the Mission

3.1.6 Develop basic service standards for Administration and circulate to all staff.

3.1.7 Develop a detailed workplan.

Mission Responses

3.1.6 As noted in the audit we are a small mission. All staff are aware of what is offered, at what hours and which employee(s) do(es) what.

3.1.7 In consultation with the HOM and Third Secretary, a workplan will be developed including clear targets and objectives by October 2001.

3.2 Human Resources

3.2.1 The Human Resources function is managed by the MCO. The Mission's total complement includes three CBS and eight LES. The recent visit by HRL's Deputy Director and the Regional Advisor for Africa, completed in early February, framed a number of recommendations which will be incorporated into the MCO's workplan.

Organization Chart

3.2.2 A review of the organization chart revealed that the Office Manager (LE-06) position, formerly a Consular Assistant position, is vacant. It has been vacant since the duties of the Visa Assistant and Consular Assistant were combined into a single position in 1998. Since that time, the Accountant has been performing the duties of Office Manager in addition to carrying out her responsibilities in accounting. Recent IMS training and full access to IMS planned for early next fiscal year will mean the Accountant will not be able to continue with this dual responsibility. Moreover, with the addition last year of the MCO position which duplicates the role of the Office Manager, the position is no longer justified. Without this position, other Administration staff, with the exception of the Accountant, could report to the MCO via the Administrative Assistant (LE-05). This employee will receive training in Property and Materiel Management later in the year, and could be trained in supervisory skills as well. The CIDA Development Officer (LE-07) position will be deleted effective March 31, 2001.

3.2.3 Many job descriptions lack coincidence with duties actually performed. They will need to be reviewed and updated. Classification reviews need to either be sent to HRL for consideration, or, alternatively, some staff at neighbouring missions such as Harare can be invited to form a Mission Classification Review Committee that could have "virtual" meetings using e-mail.

Recommendations for the Mission

3.2.4 Rewrite job descriptions to ensure they reflect the actual duties being performed, and re-classify as necessary.

3.2.5 Delete Office Manager position from the Mission establishment.

- 3.2.6 Update the organization chart to reflect current Mission establishment and reporting relationships.**

Mission Responses

- 3.2.4 We are working our way through the project, with planned completion by December 2001. Some have been done and one was submitted to a Classification Review Committee in Harare for consideration for reclassification, but was turned down.**
- 3.2.5 We agree that with full access to IMS, the Accountant will not be able to continue with any other responsibilities. We disagree strenuously, however, with the view that the Office Manager and new MCO positions overlap or duplicate each other's role. The team itself acknowledges the difficult and demanding operating environment in which the Administration Program must function. It should also be pointed out that despite its small size, Lusaka is subject to the same demands from the administrative side of the house as other much larger posts. It is our view that the OM position should supervise all administrative staff except the Accountant and should take over responsibility for much of the day-to-day supervision and constant follow-up which is required to maintain an acceptable level of service, thus permitting the MCO to exercise the managerial aspect of his position. The new MCO is doing yeoman service in clearing up the backlog, but he is already working far too much overtime and we do not see any relief on the horizon. He also stands in for the Visa Officer when required and will soon be taking over the Mission Security Officer function. Without the support of this senior administrative LES position, we very much fear that it will prove difficult, if not impossible, to move beyond what the team described as being "too reactive to Administration demands". On a recent visit, PAM urged us to fill the OM position as soon as possible and we intend to do so.**

GAA Comment

- 3.2.5 The few CBS bear the heavy administrative burden at the Mission. With the addition of an AS position, we are hoping that less administrative work will be required from the HOM. In this perspective, we support the Mission response to maintain and fill the position of Office Manager.**
- 3.2.6 The organization chart has been updated and revised to reflect the correct establishment and reporting relationships.**

Expatriate Positions

3.2.7 Two positions have been designated as expatriate, and, as such, their salaries are set in Canadian dollars. The Visa/Consular Assistant position's expatriate classification is justified on the grounds of security, given the sensitive documents and funds that are managed by this employee. The Commercial Assistant position is occupied by an individual ***. Arguments to justify the expatriate classification of this position on the basis of security are more difficult to make. Consideration should be given to re-visiting its classification with a view to having it revert to normal LES status when the position becomes vacant.

Recommendation for the Mission

3.2.8 Examine the need for the expatriate classification of the Commercial Assistant position.

Mission Response

3.2.8 We re-visited the issue of the Commercial Officer's position two years ago and agreed then, as now, that there is no justification for its designation as an expatriate position. ***

Chancery Gardener

3.2.9 A contract Chancery Gardener has been in an employer-employee relationship for nearly three years. With the compound garden and public areas, there is a continuous need for the services. However, there is a potential liability building in terms of pension and severance because the contractor could, in the future, make a claim for these benefits. To address this problem, this contract can be fulfilled by a local firm or the current contractor could be regularized into a full-time position.

Recommendation for the Mission

3.2.10 Contract a gardening services firm, or make a business case to PAM to regularize the Chancery Gardener position.

Mission Response

3.2.10 We will be making a business case to PAM by December 2001 to regularize the Chancery Gardener position.

LES Meeting

3.2.11 Our meeting with the LES indicates their primary concerns relate to the the lack of a viable pension scheme, the need for a benefits review, and the need for more cultural sensitivity by the CBS.

3.2.12 The pension issue is of great concern to the LES. *** In anticipation of a replacement scheme and to ensure the staff do not have a large amount to contribute at once, deductions from employees' pay are being made and coded to the liability account in IMS. A viable alternative plan is necessary so that staff can be protected.

3.2.13 A general benefits review is also considered urgent by the LES. Severance and the medical plan require review and updating. This survey should lead to detailed recommendations for Headquarters to approve changes to the current package. Staff expressed satisfaction with their salaries, but said recent salary increases, granted due to high local inflation, were slow in coming.

3.2.14 The LES appreciate the styles of the HOM and the Program Managers, who all encourage open communication. They circulate regularly throughout the Chancery, creating good visibility and good working and personal relations. Nonetheless, cultural sensitivity was lacking in some CBS in the past, and the suggestion was made that some more training could be offered in this area prior to posting, with follow-up once at Mission, as has ben done by USAID for their staff.

Recommendations for the Mission

3.2.15 With the guidance of HRL, the Mission should investigate and propose an alternative to the National Pension Scheme.

3.2.16 Compile benefits survey data and submit to HRL with recommendations.

3.2.17 Explore the possibility of offering cultural sensitivity training on-site to newly arrived CBS.

Mission Responses

3.2.15 We are currently exploring with HRL alternatives to NAPSA. Copies of the US pension scheme as well as other information from our markers have been sent to them for analysis and HRL hopes to be in a position soon to advise the Mission on how to proceed to re-instate a pension scheme.

3.2.16 The survey was completed and submitted to HRL following consultation with the LES. Our recommendations took into account LES concerns and views. HRL will be responding when they have had time to study the details.

3.2.17 Training can be organized and the Mission will make arrangements for sessions following the arrival of the new HOM.

Training

3.2.18 While some staff have received training in various areas, the Mission does not have a training plan. A training plan allows for a coordinated approach to training for all staff. A complete plan would include a schedule for all staff requiring training, and would show which staff have had what training and at what point in time. It could also include an approximate budget.

Recommendation for the Mission

3.2.19 Develop a Mission training plan for all Mission staff.

Mission Response

3.2.19 Noted. We will follow the CFSI training plan in deciding what training initiatives to pursue for Mission staff.

Other HR Issues

3.2.20 The LES Handbook needs to be reviewed and updated once the results of the benefits survey are complete. Enhanced reliability checks (ERC's) for all LES had not been done, but they were underway at the time of the audit. As mentioned in the HRL visit report, individual LES files have not been created.

Mission Comment

The LES Handbook will be updated once HRL has responded to the benefits survey. Although a couple of LES files need to be created most are in existence and just need to be kept up to date which will be done in due course.

3.3 Physical Resources

3.3.1 The Physical Resources function is well managed by the MCO, assisted by an LES Administrative Assistant (LE-05). The Administrative Assistant was a Mission Driver prior to 1992. He was deployed to the vacant Administrative Assistant

position last year. He has had no training, but it is planned that this employee be on the next Property and Materiel training session offered each fall by CFSI. A workplan would be a useful tool, which could include an annual property inspection schedule. With the exception of the new SQ acquired for the MCO, all properties are Crown-owned. The updating of the Mission Property Management Plan is underway.

Recommendation for the Mission

3.3.2 Create a Property workplan, including annual property inspections.

Mission Response

3.3.2 In consultation with SRSF and with advice from experienced property personnel from other missions in the area, a property work plan will be developed. Annual property inspections will also be carried out. We hope that the RMO will visit the region and add his input.

Chancery

3.3.3 The Chancery is a very large Crown-owned building that was formerly the Czechoslovakia Embassy. The property is a walled compound, complete with a swimming pool and tennis court. It provides far too much space for the current and anticipated future needs of DFAIT. It represented good value at the time of the purchase in 1992 during the CIDA decentralization exercise. To make use of some of the excess space, the Mission has leased out parts of the ground floor to the IMF and the CIDA PSU. The annual rental income resulting from these leases is \$45,000 and \$62,100, respectively. The separate offices do not have access to the Mission space, which allows each operation to function independently. Despite these two tenants, there is still a surplus of office and storage space. Presently, no changes to the number of CBS are anticipated. The idea of disposing of the building and relocating to more efficient office space needs to be explored.

Recommendation for the Mission

3.3.4 Gather information for submission to SRD on local market conditions and viability of replacing the Chancery.

Mission Response

3.3.4 While we do not disagree that the Chancery building is larger than we need, we would point out that the space available for the Mission is or will soon be completely utilized. The office market, as a whole, is currently suffering from a mismatch in supply and demand.

Demand exists for good quality space, of which there is very little available. We do not foresee this trend changing in the near future. The Mission will keep an eye on local market conditions and the feasibility of replacing the Chancery.

Pool Maintenance

3.3.5 The SQs and the OR all have pools, while the swimming pool at the Chancery pool is never used. Pool maintenance is costly, amounting to over \$400 per month per pool some months. For the SQs, CBS are charged \$40 per month as a cost-recovery. As per Departmental regulations, the Mission should be recovering from CBS 100 percent of common or daily SQ pool upkeep costs unless these charges relate to actual maintenance or repair. In contrast, the cost for maintenance of the pool at the new Crown-leased SQ is much lower, being approximately \$60 per month. It is worth noting that a different firm is listed as the supplier for this SQ. The MCO has plans to terminate the current pool maintenance contract, and add the other properties to the contract with the cheaper maintenance firm.

Recommendations for the Mission

- 3.3.6 **Ensure costs for pool upkeep are recovered from CBS as per regulations.**
- 3.3.7 **Obtain competitive bids to ensure that best value for money is being received for pool maintenance.**

Mission Responses

- 3.3.6 **Given the history of trying to maintain the pools in Lusaka in an acceptable condition at all times in order to avoid health problems, etc, it was decided three years ago, on the recommendation of the Administrative section in Harare, to contract out the maintenance of the pools. This seems to be the simplest solution and one where the responsibility for the good condition of the pool rests squarely on the shoulders of the contractor. In order that the principle of the SQ occupant contributing to the cost of the upkeep adhered to, Harare also recommended that CBS should pay a monthly fee of CAD \$40, a system which has been in place since 1998.**

SIV Comment

- 3.3.6 **In spite of Harare's advice, According to SRMW Policy Section, the CBS must pay for all costs for regular maintenance of the SQ pools, even if a more expensive contractor option is used.**

3.3.7 We changed service providers on April 1, 2001.

Chancery Maintenance

3.3.8 The Mission has budgeted approximately \$45,000 for Chancery maintenance, which is moderate for a building this size. At the time of the audit, a roof leak had existed for some time, even though the roof was replaced in 2000. The original contractor was working on resolving the problem. As a result of the extensive water intrusion, a number of items in storage in the basement areas have been damaged.

Official Residence and Staff Quarters

3.3.9 The Official Residence is a spacious bungalow with three bedrooms that is very suitable and which has recently been enhanced. Three bathrooms have been renovated resulting in a high-quality finished product. There are frequent power outages during the day and night.

3.3.10 The two staff quarters are three bedroom units in good condition. The most recently acquired SQ, a Crown-lease for the MCO, is a modest bungalow located close to the Chancery. Floor plans and measurements have not been taken for the new SQ, nor has a distribution account been done.

Recommendations for the Mission

3.3.11 Measure the new SQ and prepare floor plans for submission to SRD.

3.3.12 Prepare a Distribution Account for the new SQ.

Mission Responses

3.3.11 The new SQ will be measured and the floor plans submitted to SRD.

3.3.12 The Distribution Account will be prepared.

Surplus Assets

3.3.13 Numerous items are in storage in the basement areas of the Chancery, awaiting disposal next fiscal year. Maid's quarters furniture needs replacing at some of the SQs, and the MCO intends to use surplus assets to this end. An inventory is on file of stored items, but is in need of updating. The Property Manual outlines acceptable disposal options.

3.3.14 According to financial records, three televisions were purchased in 2000. These units, seen by the Audit Team, are deemed to be excessive given they replaced serviceable units and their cost of close to \$5,000 for the three. The Mission will need to better review this type of expenditure in future to avoid the perception of wasteful spending.

Recommendation for the Mission

3.3.15 Ensure capital assets purchased in future can be justified.

Mission Response

3.3.15 The Mission will continue to review all capital expenditures. However, in our view, the purchase of the television sets was justified on the grounds that there are few if any other recreational opportunities in Lusaka (e.g. no cinemas, theatre, musical activities, etc.). Two of the three units replaced may have been serviceable, but were many years old and below standard size and the third has been transferred to the Canada Room for use in presentations, meetings, etc.

SIV Comment

3.3.15 While outdated appliances should be replaced, the standard size television, according to Departmental Materiel Authorization Tables, is 25", considerably smaller than those procured.

Official Vehicles

3.3.16 The Mission fleet consists of three vehicles of which two are 4X4's. All the vehicles are relatively new. In general, the fleet is well managed, with vehicle logs maintained. However, little analysis of the recorded data is being done. An analysis of gas consumption, for example, can reveal inconsistencies that may require attention.

3.3.17 One of the 4X4's is rented out for personal use on weekends to CBS on an exceptional basis. The rate charged is shown as \$24 per day, whereas the Department's actual personal use rate is \$29. The HOM is not authorizing each time an official vehicle is rented for personal use. When the MCO and the Third Secretary were awaiting shipment of their own vehicles, daily use was made of official vehicles to transport the two CBS to and from the office, but there was no commuting share charged.

Recommendations for the Mission

- 3.3.18 Perform regular analysis of vehicle log data.**
- 3.3.19 Ensure the correct rental rate is charged for personal use of official vehicles.**
- 3.3.20 Ensure HOM authorizes each occasion an official vehicle, due to exceptional circumstances, is rented for personal use to a CBS.**
- 3.3.21 Calculate and recover the commuting share from the MCO and the Third Secretary.**

Mission Responses

- 3.3.18 Regular analysis of vehicle log data will be done.**
- 3.3.19 Note that the 4x4s are rented to CBS on a regular basis for recreational purposes. The correct rental rate is now charged.**

SIV Comment

- 3.3.19 Official vehicles are to be rented to CBS only as per MATs Vol.1, chapter 9.12**
- 3.3.20 The HOM authorizes each utilization of an official vehicle for personal use, whether for recreational or exceptional purposes.**
- 3.3.21 In consultation with the Inspection team, a formula was agreed upon for recovering the commuting share from the Second and Third Secretary. The commuting share will be recovered.**

3.4 Finance

3.4.1 The MCO manages the Finance function, assisted by an Accountant (LE-06). The addition of the MCO has permitted more direct supervision of this function. In general, the finances of the Mission are well managed. The Accountant attended an in-Canada training course that has resulted in improved accounts management, and in-depth distance IMS training was ongoing during the audit. Full access to IMS, proposed for early in the new fiscal year, will allow the Mission to manage its accounts fully. Currently, Harare is inputting the financial data into IMS on behalf of the Mission. The Accountant, at the Mission since 1994, has a good deal of working knowledge of IMS already. She is well organized, and all procedures are followed according to the FMM. The MCO is a former IMS trainer, and is an excellent mentor for the Accountant.

SIXP Review

3.4.2 SIXP is currently verifying in detail the Mission accounts for the months of June, July and August of 2000, and their findings will form the subject of a separate report.

Reference Levels

3.4.3 In general, the reference level for the Mission is sufficient to meet current and projected future needs, except for CBS overtime which will most likely not be enough, given the addition of the AS position. The capital reference level is normally \$50,000 per year, but includes extra funds of \$42,500 on a one-time basis for capital purchases associated with the additional CBS position.

Payments

3.4.4 All cheques are issued manually, with approximately 40 issued each month. This is fewer than previously as a result of direct deposit of the LES pay. Far less time is now taken in administering the twice monthly LES pay, and the room for error is greatly reduced as well. The LES are accustomed to this arrangement.

Bank Reconciliations

3.4.5 Bank reconciliations are five months late. Delays relate to the fact that when documentation is missing that supports a payment, the Hub mission holds up the processing. This dates back to when Harare performed FAA Section 33 on behalf of Lusaka. With the addition of the MCO, the certification under Section 33 is done in Lusaka and so only the amounts and appropriate coding are required for Harare to do the IMS input, and not the supporting documentation.

Recommendation for the Mission

3.4.6 Discontinue forwarding all supporting documentation to Harare.

Mission Response

3.4.6 Supporting documentation is no longer forwarded to Harare. Since March 2001 a spreadsheet is sent instead and all documentation is retained in Lusaka.

Cost Recovery

3.4.7 ***

Recommendation for the Mission

3.4.8 ***

Mission Response

3.4.8 ***

Hospitality and Travel

3.4.9 Hospitality and travel allocations are sufficient to meet Program needs for the current year. The addition of the MCO position may prove that a future increase is warranted, but neither the Third Secretary nor the MCO have used very much of the allocation this fiscal year. The MCO recognizes the importance and usefulness of official representation and related hospitality. He has already participated in some Administration and Consular events hosted by other friendly Missions, and has plans to reciprocate. HOM hospitality diaries revealed that function details were included, event evaluation was done and guest lists attached, as per regulations.

3.4.10 Zambia is a large country and is difficult to get around due to poor infrastructure, making overland travel challenging. Neighbouring Malawi, also a country of accreditation, is not as large but faces many of the same issues. The HOM visits Malawi three or four times per year. The HOM has hosted a successful Canada Day event in that country for the last two years.

3.5 Information Management

3.5.1 The Informatics function is managed by the MCO, assisted by a SIGNET Support Assistant (SSA). Considering the limited resources the Mission has available, the function is well managed. The Mission operates in an environment where power supply is uncertain and assistance for problems of information technology is provided remotely. The SSA is also the Visa/Consular Assistant. The Regional Technician, based in Harare, visits as required. There are a number of tasks for the technician to carry out, some relating to office reconfiguration that have resulted in the need to move personal computers and telephones.

3.5.2 The Mission relies on Nairobi and Harare a great deal for its Informatics and systems support. Due to distances and schedules, and with the advent of technology, most often remote support is provided. With the online connection, however, having to be made via a European hub, the remedy frequently cannot be affected because the system times out. SXD hopes that "PC Anywhere", a new system that allows for remote assistance to be provided directly and not via a hub, will greatly improve the remedy support when it is instituted next fiscal year.

3.5.3 The Outlook Public Folders are being used for information sharing, but given the limited access and functionality of this system, the paper-based alternative is also maintained. Filing is somewhat behind, but no security-cleared spouses are at the Mission who could be contracted to clear the backlog.

Mission Comment

Note that although staff maintain working files, no filing has been done since 1994/5, when the CBS position responsible for maintaining the registry was removed. The situation is unlikely to change, as there are no security-cleared spouses at the mission and it is not, in our view, cost effective for the HOM, Third Secretary or MCO to spend time filing.

Files

3.5.4 Many of the Lusaka files, such as previous Property and Finance files, are held in Harare. With the discontinuation of the Hub and Spoke arrangement, these files are needed in Lusaka for referencing financial transaction or property expense histories.

Recommendation for the Mission

3.5.5 Request the transfer of all the Lusaka administrative files from Harare.

Mission Response

3.5.5 We will ask Harare to send the files.

MISSION RESOURCES FACT SHEET

Human Resources (FTEs)

PROGRAM	CBS	LES	TOTAL
HOM Office	1	0	1
IBD	0	1	1
General Relations	1	0	1
Development	0	1*	1
Immigration	0	1	1
Consular/Administration	1	9	10
Total	3	12	15

* until Mar.31, 2001

NB: one HonCon in Blantyre, Malawi

Physical Resources

ASSETS	OWNED	LEASED
Chancery	1	0
OR	1	0
SQs	1	1
Vehicles	3	0

Financial Information 2000/2001

Operating Budget (N001)	\$375,200
LES Salaries (N012)	137,270
CBS Overtime (N011)	7,000
Capital (N005)	50,000
Total	\$569,470