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**AUDIT
OF
THE CANADIAN EMBASSY**

VATICAN

DECEMBER 2001

Audit Division (SIV)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An audit of the Mission to the Holy See was conducted during the period March 27 to April 5, 2001. A previous audit was conducted in 1994. The Mission to the Holy See shares its Administration Program with the Mission to Italy in Rome. The two Missions were audited concurrently and the audit coverage of the Administration Program is found in the Rome report.

The Mission has just completed a very busy Jubilee Year for the Vatican and is now preparing for World Youth Day that will be staged in Toronto in July 2002. The Pope and more than 1,000,000 visitors are expected for the event. The Mission has been authorized a temporary position, to help plan this event, and planning for it will consume a significant portion of the Mission's resources over the next year. The Mission has also been authorized a new two-year term Administrative Assistant position.

The Head of Mission (HOM) had been at the Mission for six months at the time of the audit. He has brought a new dynamic approach to the Mission. Staff role changes that had started under the prior HOM are continuing and the staff were undergoing a period of uncertainty. Job descriptions for all staff will need to be reviewed.

As a small Mission, with two Canada-Based Staff (CBS) and three Locally-Engaged Program Staff (LES), the Mission has limited capacity. To be successful the Mission must be focussed, ensuring its priorities are clear and agreed upon with Headquarters.

This report contains 12 recommendations. Given the responses received from the Mission and Headquarters, all recommendations have been implemented or are in process of implementation.

MISSION MANAGEMENT

1.1 Overview

1.1.1 The Mission has emerged successfully from the Vatican's Jubilee Year and is now preparing for World Youth Day 2002 to be staged in Toronto in July 2002. The Pope and over 1,000,000 youth from 150 countries are expected to attend.

1.1.2 The new HOM has brought a dynamic approach to the Mission, one that promotes creativity and greater engagement with officials in the Vatican and enhanced reporting to Headquarters and Missions. The roles of Mission staff, that had started to evolve under the previous HOM, are continuing to do so. At the time of the audit, LES were still in the adjustment phase and most were uncomfortable with their job packages and lacked full understanding of their roles. The Mission will need to devote time and energy to ensure that staff acclimatize to their new roles. This will be facilitated by the addition of two term positions which will help the Mission cope with its increased operational obligations. (The Mission has now recruited a new HOM Assistant (LE-06) and Term Assistant for WYD Operations (LE-06).)

1.1.3 Like all small Missions, the Holy See must continually search for that balance of maintaining a dynamic program with the reality of managing limited resources. Developing clear priorities, with HQ, is critical to making best use of limited resources. The HOM has used the Performance Agreement for this purpose.

1.2 Mission Staff

1.2.1 The HOM is supported by a Canada-Based Counsellor and three Locally-Engaged Staff: Research Assistant (LE 06), Administrative Coordinator (LE 05) and Communication Assistant/Receptionist (LE 05). All staff are highly qualified, perhaps over-qualified for their duties, and offer an excellent range of skills. The HOM is also supported by a Driver and three Domestic Staff.

1.3 Reporting by the Mission

1.3.1 The Mission believes its reporting would be beneficial to other Missions and is now judiciously expanding its audience. The relationship with the Vatican has both a bilateral and multilateral nature. The Mission is tasked by DFAIT and it is left to the Mission to determine its frequency of reporting. Other Government Departments do not task the Mission although some reporting is of direct interest to them. We reviewed a sampling of the Mission's reports and found them to be of high quality.

1.4 Administration Services Memorandum of Understanding

1.4.1 The Mission shares its Administration Program with the Mission in Rome. The relationship with the Administration Program is governed by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for Administrative Services which is now dated and should be updated. In particular, the MOU should be broadened to cover all services provided by the Administration Program and service standards should be incorporated therein. The MOU should indicate which services will and will not be provided and should indicate who will provide the services. The MOU should also indicate the time frame for delivery of services, including rare urgent services. The MOU should be reviewed at least yearly. The Mission may also wish to explore with Rome whether other (non-administrative) services could be made available when needed; for example, translation or press services.

Recommendation for the Mission

1.4.2 The Mission should renegotiate its MOU for Administrative Services with a view to updating and expanding it and including service standards. The Mission should also explore other areas of collaboration with the Mission in Rome.

Mission Response

1.4.2 A new MOU for Administrative Services has been renegotiated and accepted by both Missions. It enlarges substantially the scope of our collaboration beyond the administrative sectors. The new MOU shall be signed by the two HOMs in the coming days.

1.5 Job Descriptions

1.5.1 A review of the LES job descriptions indicated that they were not well written. Wording was often awkward and the job descriptions did not clearly indicate or detail duties. Two positions had double reporting lines. There is a need to rewrite each job description. Firstly, however, there needs to be a period of stabilization to ensure duties to be included in the job descriptions will be accurate, complete and reflective of work to be done. The changes occurring at the Mission as well as an updating of the MOU with the Administration Program can both impact on duties. For example, while there is a tendency among small Missions to take responsibility for as many administrative duties as possible, the Mission may be better off by ensuring it is well supported by the Administration Program, and using its own Administrative Coordinator for more program duties.

1.5.2 Once job descriptions have been rewritten they should be submitted to the Classification Committee for review to ensure they are properly levelled. The Rome

Classification Committee should be used for this purpose and the Committee should be expanded to include the Holy See Mission's Counsellor.

Recommendation for the Mission

1.5.3 Review and rewrite all LES job descriptions and submit them to the Classification Committee for assessment.

Mission Response

1.5.3 Most of the LES job descriptions have now been reviewed and rewritten (including two new job descriptions for the new employees). We are also in the process of adjusting the job description of the Administration Coordinator. They will soon be submitted to the Classification Committee.

1.6 Training Planning

1.6.1 As staff adjust to new roles, there may be training, either locally or in HQ that could assist staff in the adjustment process and in acquiring new skills and knowledge. Training needs are best identified through the appraisal process.

Recommendation for the Mission

1.6.2 Develop a training plan for all staff.

Mission Response

1.6.2 A training plan has been developed and we have already proposed a management course in Ottawa for our Administration Coordinator.

1.7 Overtime Policy and Application

1.7.1 The Mission does not have a consistent approach for compensation of overtime. When staff are not treated in a common fashion, it can affect morale. The Mission in Rome has a similar overtime issue and will be reviewing its overtime policy. The Mission may wish to work with Rome to develop a common policy and practices.

Recommendation for the Mission

1.7.2 The Mission should ensure that it has an overtime policy that is clear, understood and applied consistently.

Mission Response

- 1.7.2 Necessary measures have been taken to harmonize our overtime policy and we are consulting with the Embassy in Rome to ensure that we apply a common practice.**

1.8 Web-Site Development

1.8.1 The Mission does not now have a web-site. Given that a significant portion of Canadians who are in contact with the Mission are tourists planning to visit the Vatican, a web-site could be an excellent tool to provide general information, answer frequently asked questions, and provide a link to the related sites (Vatican, City of Rome, Mission in Rome, etc.). The web-site might also reduce the telephone calls to the Mission, thereby permitting the Receptionist to carry out other duties. The Mission in Rome has expertise in web-site development and, along with HQ, can guide the Mission in the development of a web-site.

Recommendation for the Mission

- 1.8.2 Develop a Web-Site.**

Mission Response

- 1.8.2 The project of a Web-Site is in the process of being implemented. A general proposal has already been prepared and with the assistance of SXIA and REOP our Web-Site should be operational by the end of November 2001.**

1.9 Hospitality Diaries

1.9.1 The HOM Hospitality Diaries are not being signed-off in accordance with the Departmental Hospitality Policy and the FAA. The full diary, including supporting receipts, should be submitted for sign-offs by other Canada-Based Staff. We would advise that the Counsellor and the MCO provide these sign-offs.

Recommendation for the Mission

- 1.9.2 The HOM Hospitality Diaries should be signed-off in accordance with Departmental Hospitality Policy.**

Mission Response

- 1.9.2 The HOM Hospitality Diaries not signed in error by the MCO, (two trimestrial reports) have been signed accordingly. All diaries are signed in accordance with Departmental Hospitality Guidelines.**

1.10 Meetings With The Administration Program

1.10.1 While the Mission's Administration Team resides only a short distance away, in the Annex to the Rome Chancery, the physical separation no doubt makes communication between the Holy See Mission and Administration more challenging. To help bridge the separation, regular meetings, perhaps three per year, should be held at the Holy See with the Administration Team to ensure a full understanding of the Mission's operating environment and its service needs. These meetings would best be held at the beginning of the fiscal year, during the mid-point review and late in the fiscal year.

Recommendation for the Mission

- 1.10.2 The Mission should meet regularly with the full Administration Team.**

Mission Response

- 1.10.2 The two HOMs are in regular contact, as well as the Administration Team, with the Vatican Mission which it serves in a very efficient way. Now that people are back from the summer vacation period, this Mission will soon organize a meeting with the full Administration Team.**

1.11 Financial Information

1.11.1 The Mission does not have immediate access to information on the status of its budgets. The Mission receives its information periodically, or upon request, from the Administration Program. To ensure the Mission has timely information for decision-making, it should be provided with Read-Only IMS, and staff should be trained to extract required information.

Recommendation for the Mission

- 1.11.2 The Mission should request that it be provided with Read-Only IMS and related training.**

Mission Response

1.11.2 The Mission now has Read-Only IMS.

1.12 Cash Advances and Cash Payments

1.12.1 The Administration Program has been providing some advances to staff in cash. Payments to OR staff are also being paid through the HOM. In order to reduce administrative burden and to reduce risk to staff and funds, all payments to staff should be made directly to staff by depositing the funds in their bank accounts.

Recommendation for the Mission

1.12.2 All payments to staff should be deposited directly to their bank accounts.

Mission Response

1.12.2 Already implemented.

1.13 Replacement Staff

1.13.1 In a small Mission, the temporary absence of any employee impacts on operations. Also, at a Mission where Sunday is frequently a working day, staff may be working more overtime than they would prefer. To help in both of these circumstances, the Mission should develop a roster of employees or contractors who can easily step in to replace staff when required or to supplement staff during visits or emergencies. While the Mission maintains contact with retired employees, the Mission should also consider using part-time staff from the Mission in Rome as they already have an understanding of Mission operations. Rome's Drivers should also be considered for weekend work to help reduce the HOM Driver's overtime.

Recommendation for the Mission

1.13.2 Develop a roster of part-time employees and contractors to substitute for regular staff during absences.

Mission Response

1.13.2 A more rational system of replacement of staff during absences is now in place and a roster of available employees with Embassy experience has been established for this Mission.

1.14 LES Committee

1.14.1 While the Mission is too small to have its own LES Committee, the LES would benefit if at least one staff from the Holy See were to be a member of the LES Committee in Rome.

Recommendation for the Mission

1.14.2 The Mission should ensure that one of its LES becomes a member of the LES Committee in Rome.

Mission Response

1.14.2 Implemented. Our Administration Coordinator is now a member of the LES Committee in Rome.

1.15 Smoking in the Chancery

1.15.1 At present, smoking is occurring in the Chancery. This is in contravention with Departmental policy, and is subject to disciplinary action.

Recommendation for the Mission and RWD

1.15.2 Disciplinary action should be taken against any employee found to be smoking in the Chancery.

Mission Response

1.15.2 Measures have been taken to ensure that Departmental policy is respected in this matter.

RWD Response

1.15.2 Appropriate disciplinary action has been taken.

MISSION RESOURCES FACT SHEET

Human Resources (FTEs)

PROGRAM	CBS	LES	TOTAL
HOM (and driver and domestics)	1	4	5
Program and Administrative Staff	1	3	4
Total	2	7	9

Note: The Mission is also supported by an Ecclesiastical Honorary Consul.

Physical Resources

ASSETS	OWNED	LEASED
Chancery		1
OR	1	
SQs		1
Vehicles	1	

Financial Information 2000/2001

LES Salaries	\$339,876
Operational	396,696
Capital	45,000
Total	\$781,572