

**AUDIT
OF
THE CANADIAN EMBASSY**

RABAT

February 2002

Audit Division (SIV)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An audit of the International Business Development (IBD), General Relations, Consular and Administration Programs was conducted in Rabat during the period October 16 to 20, 2000. A previous audit was conducted in 1994.

MANAGEMENT OF THE MISSION

The Mission, which operates in a challenging environment, is well managed by a solid team of individuals with a diversity of experience. The Head of Mission (HOM) is very proactive and provides solid leadership for the Mission. LES are of a high quality. The Mission's budget is sufficient. The Mission has experienced a very heavy visitor load this past year and has coped admirably.

GENERAL RELATIONS PROGRAM

The Program is managed by a new FS-02 *** and is supported by an experienced LES Public Affairs Officer. The Program would benefit from the development of a plan which details the vision of Canada's future relationship with Morocco, to link to the HOM's accountability accord and to delineate roles within the Program and for other Mission Managers.

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT (IBD) PROGRAM

The International Business Development (IBD) Program is well managed by an experienced Program Manager. Trade activity between Canada and Morocco is modest but growing and is likely to provide more opportunities as the new regime follows through with proposed modernization of the economic, social and political infrastructure of the country. However, Morocco is and will continue to be very Euro-centric, which will continue to make the role of the IBD Program Manager a challenging one. The Mission has a growing clientele, which is being served in accordance with the "New Approach", with common sense adjustments to the model as dictated by the environment within which it is operating.

CONSULAR PROGRAM

The Consular Program is well managed. There are approximately 1000 Canadians registered in Morocco. The Mission also provides services to Australian citizens.

ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM

Effective administrative services are provided to all staff, and the level of client satisfaction is quite high. The MCO and his team are managing the Program well. The implementation of published service standards would strengthen the relationship with clients. The Mission's properties are managed effectively but significant property decisions will need to be made. The Chancery offices (main building and annex) are full to capacity, and do not provide quality work space. Further growth of the Mission may necessitate a new Chancery. The Mission needs to continue its efforts to find staff quarters that fall within guidelines. A recommendation to replace the Official Residence has been implemented and a new residence was occupied in September 2001.

RECOMMENDATION STATUS

This report contains 28 recommendations, 23 directed at the Mission and 5 directed at Headquarters. Based on responses received, 19 recommendations have been implemented and 9 are in process.

MANAGEMENT OF THE MISSION

1.1 Overview

1.1.1 As a well managed small-sized Mission, Rabat needs to ensure its management and administrative infrastructure remains efficient. The Mission has an active CMM and Housing Committee. The Mission does, however, need to establish two other required committees – a Health and Safety Committee and a Contract Review Board. Recommendations pertaining to these committees are contained within the Administration Section of this report. Additionally, a Classification Committee needs to be created and meet as required.

1.1.2 While the HOM's Accountability Accord serves as a planning document for the Mission, we have recommended that both the GR Program and Administration and Consular Programs prepare annual plans to guide their activities in a proactive fashion.

1.1.3 The Mission budget is sufficient, and the Mission has been a good corporate citizen by returning capital funds this year. The Mission has some financial flexibility as it has two positions which have been vacant for over a year. The Mission is planning to delete these two positions and use the funding to create another administrative position.

GENERAL RELATIONS PROGRAM

2.1 Management of the Program

2.1.1 The General Relations (GR) Program is managed by an FS-02 ***. At the time of the inspection/audit, she had been at the Mission only two months. She is supported by an experienced Public Affairs Officer (LE-08) who is responsible for Cultural and Public Affairs as well as many aspects of the HOM's social program.

2.1.2 Since the arrival of the Program Manager, the Mission had been very occupied with a large trade delegation from Quebec and an even larger Canadian trade delegation, led by MINT. These events have left little time for the Program Manager to deal with the normal workload, including planning and organizing.

Program Planning

2.1.3 No plans or other documentation (e.g., Hand-Over Log), aside from a diary, were left by the previous Program Manager and little time has been available since the new Program Manager's arrival for planning and organizing, although, a calendar of events has been prepared.

2.1.4 The HOM's Accountability Accord provides a good starting point for the development of plans, in that it contains objectives and priorities for the GR Program. Also, the HOM is very proactive and provides strong leadership in the GR area.

2.1.5 The political, social and economic environment in Morocco is undergoing considerable modernization under the leadership of the new government. Although much of the impetus of these changes stems from Morocco's desire for acceptance by the European Union, these changes will present opportunities for both the GR and IBD Programs along many fronts. For example, the thrust to privatise Moroccan state-owned businesses and the insistence that future contracting will be on an open bidding basis will make it a much more attractive and transparent market for Canadian exporters and investors.

2.1.6 The process of developing a plan for the GR Program would not only provide an opportunity to devise ways in which the Mission might plug into the wave of reforms being championed by the new government but, equally important, also provide the Program Manager with a means of sharing her vision of Canada's future relationship with Morocco with the HOM, peer Program Managers and with her subordinate.

2.1.7 A thorough planning process would clearly delineate the objectives and priorities of the Program, along with success criteria. It would provide an opportunity for the Program Manager to sort out who does what with the HOM, peer Program

Managers and her subordinate. It would also facilitate the allocation of the Post Initiative Fund (PIF), paying particular attention to events which need funds towards the end of the fiscal year. To the degree that the plan contains clear objectives and success criteria, the plan would also facilitate the development of an accountability accord between the HOM and the Program Manager and/or Part C of the Program Manager's Appraisal.

Recommendation for the Mission

- 2.1.8 The HOM, in conjunction with GMD, should ensure that a Hand-Over Log is prepared by departing Program Managers.**

Mission Response

- 2.1.8 The Hand-Over Log is being prepared by the departing GR/PA Program Manager using the Intranet site (July 2001) as a guide.**

Recommendation for GMD

- 2.1.9 GMD, perhaps jointly with other Geographics, should prepare a template Hand-Over Log for General Relations Program Managers (see Horizons Intranet site - Post Support Tools: Best Practices for an example).**

GMD Response

- 2.1.9 GMD is entirely in agreement with this recommendation on the understanding that use could be made of the Guidelines published on the IntraNet by the Trade Commissioner Service (Hand-Over Log) which could be adapted to the specific requirements of the Mission. We will be developing such a log with the Mission to be used in the next changeover.**

Recommendation for the Mission

- 2.1.10 The Program Manager should develop a plan for the GR and PA Programs.**

Mission Comment

- 2.1.10 The completion of the two major visits plus the Inspection visit allowed the HOM and Program Manager to devote priority attention to the planning of the GR and PA Programs.**

Mission Response

- 2.1.10 Responsibilities and objectives have been agreed to between the Program Manager and the HOM, for both the GR and PA Programs. Their successors will review these arrangements and revise/update them as they deem necessary.**

Program Direction: Organization

2.1.11 The Public Relations Officer does not have a current job description and her responsibilities have been supplemented over time, to the point where a new look at what the role of the Officer should (and should not) be would be beneficial. In particular, it would be an opportunity to ensure that the talents and experience of the Public Affairs Officer are used to the best advantage.

2.1.12 The preparation of a new job description would be a good time to discuss respective roles and responsibilities of the Public Affairs Officer, Program Manager and the HOM's Secretary. The review of the job description would be best done in conjunction with the planning process. Given the wide-ranging scope of the role, from HOM to sectoral to Program to whole Mission, it would also be a good opportunity to discuss cross-program and domain issues in terms of who is expected to do what to best contribute to the Mission's performance.

2.1.13 The Public Affairs Officer's function would benefit from having a small allocation from the hospitality fund.

Recommendations for the Mission

- 2.1.14 The job description of the Public Affairs Officer should be reviewed and updated.**
- 2.1.15 The Mission should consider providing the Public Affairs Officer with a small allocation from the hospitality fund.**

Mission Responses

- 2.1.14 The PA Officer's job description has been updated, following comparisons made with about ten job descriptions received from other missions having similar LES positions.**
- 2.1.15 This recommendation will be considered by the new Program Manager in consultation with the new HOM.**

Program Direction: Policies, Systems and Procedures

2.1.16 The Post Initiative Fund (PIF) instructions found at the Mission are outdated and in need of revision to ensure they reflect current circumstances.

2.1.17 The GR Program has little systemic support of the type provided to its IBD counterparts (e.g., a clear delineation of what services it should and should not provide to its various clients, systems, procedures and data bases, work tools, support units, etc.) from its Geographic and Functional “godfathers”. The GR Program could achieve much more with its limited resources if it had such support. The Inspector General presented this issue to the Departmental Audit and Evaluation Committee earlier this year.

Recommendation for GMD

2.1.18 The PIF instructions should be updated.

GMD Response

2.1.18 Action will be taken to update the instructions for the PIF. This may provide the opportunity to orient the use of these funds towards best practices in the conduct of public affairs by being more prescriptive with respect to eligible expenditures.

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT (IBD) PROGRAM

3.1 Management of the Program

3.1.1 The IBD Program is well managed by an experienced Program Manager (FS-02), ably supported by two Commercial Officers (LE-09), a Commercial Assistant (LE-06) and a Secretary (LE-05). Each of the Commercial Officers is assigned a portfolio of commercial sectors to service.

3.1.2 The Mission has had to integrate its ongoing activities with the hosting of many delegations (five in the last two years), the most recent being an environment sector delegation, led by DMT, a large Trade Delegation from Quebec of approximately 40 businesses, led by the Finance Minister, and an even larger Federal Government Trade Delegation, led by MINT.

3.1.3 As French is Morocco's preferred language when dealing with the rest of the world, a specific challenge that the IBD Program faces is to encourage commercial contacts with English as well as French speaking businesses. The Program must also promote Canada's business interests in an environment which, for historical reasons, is centred on Europe and the EU in particular. In addition, the rather opaque (until very recently) commercial environment in Morocco has often discouraged Canadian businesses from even attempting to do business there. This may change considerably in the near future, as the new regime is championing the modernization of the country on the economic (e.g., privatisation of government-owned enterprises, modernization of financial institutions, open bidding on contracts), social and political fronts.

3.1.4 The IBD Program has launched a number of initiatives aimed at improving Canada's participation in Morocco's commercial environment, including: a Guide for Canadian Exporters and Investors, "Doing Business and/or Setting Up a Business in Morocco"; market studies for key sectors; encouragement of the participation of Canadian businesses in European Trade Fairs (e.g., Agricultural Trade Fair in Paris), where they are more likely to be seen by North African commercial interests; a relationship with the Islamic Development Bank, as an alternative to EDC; articles in CANADEXPORT; a Canadian Business Club; etc. The content of the Guide is very comprehensive as regards doing business in Morocco, in comparison with some encountered at other missions.

Recommendation for GMD/TCS

3.1.5 The content of a Guide for Canadian businesses on the implications of doing business in the host country should be made more consistent and inclusive by the provision of a template, which may be adapted to local needs.

Response from TCS

- 3.1.5 A template has been obtained from two “best practices” posts (Havana and Jakarta), and could be forwarded to the Mission for adaptation.**

Response from GMD

- 3.1.5 GMD agrees that, while time-consuming, a Guide for Canadian Businesses such as that prepared by the Mission is extremely useful by addressing many aspects of exporting or investing that are of concern to companies. Reports like this are being completed for missions that do not have one, but the reports are not standardized. This should be done under the auspices of the T-Branch to ensure consistent format, content and level of detail across the entire Trade Commissioner Service. We would be pleased to consult with the T-Branch and other stakeholders to develop a template for the guides.**

Program Planning

- 3.1.6 The IBD Program has a set of objectives, which have been carried over from the previous fiscal year. These reflect quite well the HOM's objectives for the IBD Program, as expressed in his Accountability Accord, and those of the Geographic, quite well. The IBD team meets regularly to ensure that current priorities are taken into account and the intention is to update the objectives once the aftermath of the recent trade delegations has been dealt with. A number of proposals have been submitted for use of the PIBD Fund, half of which were funded (budget limitations prevented more being funded).

3.2 The New Approach

- 3.2.1 The “New Approach” is being implemented in a common sense manner, in accordance with the guidelines provided. Given that many Canadian businesses are not yet familiar with the New Approach, coupled with their continued reluctance to venture into unfamiliar territory which is still seen to be difficult terrain to navigate, in commercial terms, and given that the full range of alternative sources of services for visiting businesses is not always available, a certain amount of leeway is given in the services provided by the Mission. In particular, where there is an opportunity to pursue sectoral objectives, as part of a specific initiative by one or more businesses, the Mission is more willing to provide a broader range of services.

- 3.2.2 Notwithstanding, the Mission takes every opportunity to inform Canadian businesses of the nature and implications of the New Approach and maintains a database of contacts for sources of alternative services. It is also reorienting its

activities to concentrate on outreach and advocacy, providing market prospects and intelligence and related proactive activities. Outreach activity would be greatly facilitated by sector information kits on Canadian companies that are active in the respective sectors. The Program Manager should pursue this issue with TCD, which is already looking into it.

3.2.3 The list of contacts provided by the IBD Program for the purpose of the TCS Client Survey was only 50% as long as the previous year's, yet the actual number of contacts has been increasing steadily. The reason for the apparent decrease is the different interpretation of "contact" by the current Program Manager from that of his predecessor. The definition of what constitutes a contact has been clarified by TCD.

3.3 Program Delivery Infrastructure

3.3.1 Frequent use is made of Export Services at HQ (e.g., PSU, IBOC). The WIN On-line system, currently being used by the Mission for entering contacts, is considerably slower and has less functionality (e.g., no local database) than its predecessor from the end user's point of view. This is a prevalent problem for the Mission IBD Programs, which TCD is well aware of. Plans are being made to replace the current version of the system with a web-based one which is expected to be more responsive and functionally complete.

CONSULAR PROGRAM

4.1 Management of the Program

4.1.1 The Consular Program is well managed by the MCO, with daily operations the responsibility of the Consular Assistant (LE-06). The Mission is also responsible for the provision of Consular Services to Australian citizens. Approximately 25 percent of the MCO's time is spent on the Consular Program. The Consular Assistant is very experienced and dedicated to the Program and provides a high quality of service. Most of her time is spent on consular cases, with approximately ten percent of her time spent on other administrative tasks. The Mission recently requested that HQ grant her delegated signing authority. There are no Honorary Consuls in Morocco.

4.2 Service to Canadian Citizens

4.2.1 The Consular Assistant provides effective services to Canadian citizens. She operates very efficiently and provides high quality client service in both official languages as well as in Arabic. Service standards for consular services are posted in the reception area. The Consular Assistant has access to a wicket from her office that connects directly to the reception area. There is no Consular booth at the Mission that could enhance the privacy to discuss cases without the Consular Assistant having to bring the clients into her office.

4.2.2 There are approximately 1,000 Canadians registered with the Mission, mostly in Rabat and Casablanca, and nine wardens have been identified in Moroccan districts where there is a Canadian presence. There is currently one Canadian in prison in Rabat and the Mission has a current list of contacts for all eventualities. The Mission updated its contingency plan for Morocco in the summer of 2000.

4.3 Passport and Citizenship Services

4.3.1 Passport and Consular services are being delivered in an effective and timely manner. According to recent COMIP reports, the Mission issues an average of 25 to 30 passports per month. Passport supplies *** were reviewed and reconciled during the audit. ***

Recommendation for the Mission

4.3.2 ***
Mission Response

4.3.2 ***

4.3.3 The Canadian community in Morocco asked to have access to a list of specialists such as lawyers, doctors, dentists to which they can refer. The Mission will take action in sending a newsletter to all registered Canadians which will include a list of contacts.

Passport Control

4.3.4 Control and security of passports was found to be appropriate. ***

ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM

5.1 Management of the Program

5.1.1 The MCO arrived at the Mission in 1999 ***. He quickly established himself as *** administrator, and is managing well. The LES working in the Administration Section are very competent. The relationship between the MCO and the other staff at the Mission is very good, and his open door policy encourages good communication for both LES and CBS. The MCO participates in the CMM in an active manner. He meets with the LES twice per month or more if needed. He also meets regularly with MCOs from other missions to discuss areas of common concern.

5.1.2 Program Managers are very satisfied with the services provided by the Administration Section, and noted major improvements since the arrival of the present MCO. Many commented on how busy the Section was and that they appreciated some of the difficulties of delivering services given the local environment.

Planning and Objective Setting Process

5.1.3 While the Administration (and Consular) Program, as a service function, is often reactive in nature, there is nevertheless a need for annual planning. These plans would set out the objectives and targets for the year, subject to regular review, and would thus ensure that the Program remains as proactive as possible. Plans should be discussed with the HOM and CMM to ensure priorities are understood and accepted, and should flow naturally down from the HOM Accountability Accord. Administration and Consular staff should be part of the planning process, and this can then allow for a tie-in with the appraisal process. Currently, no formal annual plan is drawn up which contains objectives for each section, either as part of the appraisal process or as part of a general Administration and Consular planning exercise.

Recommendation for the Mission

5.1.4 Develop, maintain and promulgate annual plans that set out Administration and Consular Program objectives and targets, and review and update as required.

Mission Response

5.1.4 Administrative and Consular planning is ongoing. A specific plan will be developed following the arrival of the new HOM.

Service Standards

5.1.5 Service standards allow clients to know what to expect and when to expect it. They also protect Administration from unreasonable demands. The document should detail normal service standards and have a provision for urgent requirements on an exceptional basis. Standards should be reviewed and revised periodically.

Recommendation for the Mission

5.1.6 The Mission should produce service standards, present them to the CMM for approval, and circulate to all staff.

Mission Response

5.1.6 Service standards were implemented and circulated to all staff in May 2001.

5.2 Human Resources

Management of the Program

5.2.1 The MCO is responsible for Human Resources management and is assisted by an Administrative Assistant (LE-05). The Program is well managed. Consistent recruiting and staffing procedures are followed, resulting in the right employees being employed in the appropriate positions. Most LES appraisals are up to date. Outstanding appraisals are underway, accompanied by a message from the responsible Program Manager allowing the LES increment to be granted in the interim. The LES Handbook was brought up to date in September 2000 and all LES employees have a copy. The MCO meets his staff regularly and it is within the context of these meetings that planning is done.

5.2.2 There are currently two vacant positions in Administration that have not been filled for over one year. One is a Chancery gardener and the other is the Handyman. According to the Mission neither position is needed, given that good contractors are available for minor repairs and that gardening demands are lower than in the past. The Mission is planning to delete these two positions and use the funding to create another administrative position.

Classification

5.2.3 A reclassification of the Commercial Assistant position was done by HRL when it should have been done at the Mission given the delegation of classification

authority. The MCO was aware of this, and intends to consider all classification actions at the Mission.

5.2.4 There are one or two reclassifications planned for the near future. One is the LE-05 Accountant position which appears to be under-classified given the duties being performed. An updated job description should be prepared and considered by the Classification Committee.

Recommendation for the Mission

5.2.5 Form a Classification Committee to review new or revised job descriptions to ensure appropriate position levels.

Mission Response

5.2.5 Implemented. A Classification Committee has been established for all reclassifications and for the classification of new positions. The reclassification of recent positions in Administration has been carried out by the Committee following prescribed procedures.

Meeting with LES Representatives

5.2.6 Currently, there is no active LES committee. The MCO meets representatives of the LES complement on an *ad hoc* basis, as often as the LES wish. The Audit Team met with five LES representatives in order to discuss issues of concern to the LES community.

5.2.7 The three major issues concerned retirement benefits, the medical plan and classifications. The question of converting service earned prior to 1998 is of particular concern. It was in this year that all LES were switched from the World Wide Scheme to the local social security scheme CNSS. Those staff with prior service require their credits to be converted but the calculation appears complicated. A proposal was sent to Treasury Board a number of months ago but still no response has been obtained.

5.2.8 In general, all staff appreciate the medical plan. Some members of the group expressed a desire to have enhancement coverage, stating the current ceiling was somewhat low given costs of good medical care in Morocco. These same LES further stated this would be desirable, even if an employee contribution was necessary. It should be noted there was no consensus on this latter point.

5.2.9 The issue of classification was raised, with some members expressing frustration at the lack of a career path, noting that the plateau after 13 steps or increments can be discouraging. The Audit Team explained the limits to the

classification system, and the LES understood the difficulty in expanding promotion possibilities in a Mission of its size.

Recommendation for the Mission

- 5.2.10 Survey the LES community for consensus on medical plan coverage changes, and then forward these to HRL for analysis within the insurance survey.**

Mission Response

- 5.2.10 The Mission is in the process of re-evaluating the medical plan coverage in conjunction with instructions received from HRL.**

Recommendation for HRL

- 5.2.11 An update should be sent to the Mission on the issue of the conversion of retirement benefits.**

HRL Response

- 5.2.11 HRL sent a detailed message to the Mission in June 2001 seeking information and clarification from local authorities about possible options on dealing with LES past service prior to joining the CIMR in April 1998. Depending on preparation, a visit to the Mission could be arranged for early 2002 to provide counselling to LES.**

Training

- 5.2.12 The issue of training is of primary importance to the HOM and all Program Managers. French is the dominant working language of Morocco but a good working knowledge of Arabic is extremely useful for any CBS and official language training would be important for some LES in key positions. A Mission training plan would compile present levels of training for all employees, and allow for those needing training to be identified and possibly to have training funded.**

Recommendation for the Mission

- 5.2.13 Create an annual training plan, with costs, that includes the provision of English and French language training for LES in key positions.**

Mission Response

- 5.2.13 English language training has been implemented and is ongoing. The Mission has authorized relevant training when requested by employees but will also explore establishing an annual or long term training plan.**

Occupational Safety and Health

5.2.14 Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) was recognized by the HOM and the MCO as an important issue for all staff. No formal OSH Committee exists but the CMM is used as the forum to discuss these items, as required. Since the CMM is the forum for discussions, the LES are not able to participate. The LES should be involved in this important area, as OSH issues affect all Mission staff. The Canada Labour Code stipulates this as a requirement for organizations of twenty or more employees.

Recommendation for the Mission

- 5.2.15 Form an Occupational Safety and Health Committee, comprised of both CBS and LES, and meet as often as necessary, ensuring minutes are recorded and filed.**

Mission Response

- 5.2.15 Occupational Safety and Health Committee has been established and will meet semi-annually or as required. Staff at the Mission have been encouraged to inform the Committee of any areas of concern regarding health and safety at the workplace.**

Legal Advice

5.2.16 The Mission does not have a legal counsel it can use on an “as required” basis. One would be useful for Consular issues, labour law, property and other legal matters. Recently, there have been some local labour code items that have come up, such as the work week for the guards which was shortened to meet the legal maximum.

Recommendation for the Mission

- 5.2.17 Contact one or more legal counsels that specialize in the various areas of concern to Mission operations and use them as needed.**

Mission Response

5.2.17 Mission has used legal counsels in the past for specific occasions but has found it not to be cost effective to retain one dedicated counsel. The Mission will check with other missions of similar size to compare such requirements for legal advice. In the meantime, the Mission will continue to seek legal advice as the occasion arises.

5.3 Physical Resources

Management of the Program

5.3.1 The Physical Resources function is well managed by the MCO, assisted by an Office Manager (LE-07). The property inventory consists of the Chancery and Annex, the Official Residence and eight Crown-Leased Staff Quarters. The Office Manager receives and processes work orders, makes contractor selection for repairs, orders supplies, and ensures all work is carried out in a timely fashion. CBS interviewed were generally pleased with the services provided by the section.

5.3.2 Five SQs were visited and, in general, were found to be reasonable in terms of condition, size and cost, given the local market. Some SQs were large overall, but this was primarily due to the standard local design that includes a larger entranceway and a larger living-dining area. Bedroom areas, however, are smaller than Ottawa-Hull standards.

5.3.3 Disposal sales of surplus assets are carried out twice per year on average, due to lack of storage on the Chancery site, and are executed as per departmental guidelines.

Chancery

5.3.4 The Chancery consists of a main building and an Immigration Annex located one block away. Both are converted apartment buildings with limited reception areas and inconvenient layouts. All areas of both buildings are fully utilized, especially given the Quebec Immigration Service's (QIS) frequent visits (more than 30 weeks total last year). The uncertainty about QIS intentions with respect to posting one or more officers to Rabat is a preoccupation for the Mission. Full costings have been done and submitted but no firm answer has been received from Quebec. Some additional points about space utilization are that the Mission conference room is in the secure area of the Chancery and so cannot be used for general purpose meetings, and there is no multi-purpose room or recreational facilities attached to the building.

5.3.5 The Chancery with the Annex is costing approximately \$65,000 per annum in rent. This low amount reflects the state of the rental market in Rabat. New, modern office space suitable to current and future needs of the Mission can be rented

for approximately \$145,000 per annum. This amount is still a relatively low annual cost as compared to many other missions.

Recommendation for the Mission

5.3.6 Gather data on alternative office rental space on the local market and submit to SRD for consideration.

Mission Response

5.3.6 The Mission has provided information to SRD on office space rental. The SRD Portfolio Manager for the region has made a site visit and has established that, given the local conditions and the quality of local construction, the best choice for Rabat would be that of a construction project for the Chancery and the OR. SRD and the AMA are aware of this issue and initial planning is in progress. However, a decision regarding the accommodation within the Mission of a co-located Quebec Immigration Service office may be taken in the near future. Given the lack of space for this new officer(s), this would give rise to the rental and fit-up, at considerable cost, of a second Annex. Implementing this project is likely to take priority over the comprehensive solution of a new Chancery project.

Official Residence

5.3.7 The OR is a large Crown-Leased house on a well-appointed property that features a very large garden and a pool. This Residence exceeds space guidelines (530 square metres versus 451 square metres as per TB). Some negative features reduce the functionality of this OR, such as a very poor layout of the ground floor meaning the number of persons at receptions is restricted, plus a lack of parking. As well, the Mission is reporting increasing cracking appearing along inside and outside walls as the property continues to settle after a basement excavation project initiated by the landlord. Systems problems such as water circulation, heating and electrical are also contributing factors to this problem property. The landlord is very unresponsive to the Mission, and desires simply to dispose of the property as opposed to making further investment in needed structural or even cosmetic repairs.

5.3.8 SRD has a project memorandum for this OR and has included it on the list for replacement in the future. The Mission feels the OR should be replaced as soon as possible, and the Audit Team agrees with this.

Recommendation for SRD

5.3.9 Seek a replacement Official Residence.

SRD Response

5.3.9 A new Official Residence was located in June 2001, and occupied in September 2001.

Staff Quarters

5.3.10 Staff Quarters (SQs) in general are quite modern, well maintained, and furnished according to departmental standards. Some CBS complained of worn out or mismatched pieces of furniture in their SQs. Some units are over-sized, and appropriate authority has not been obtained as per regulations. Recent acquisitions have attempted to be in line with TB space guidelines but the local market is quite limited in offering housing that complies readily with the Treasury Board limitations. There is some doubt as to accurate measurements in the case of two properties deemed to be over-sized, and the Mission intends to re-measure in order to be sure of all figures. Utilities costs are high but many CBS are not aware of this. Therefore, Administration should circulate copies of the actual invoices to CBS so they can appreciate the higher relative cost compared to Canada. The Mission has made good use of alternative technology to reduce costs, such as installing solar panels to heat hot water in some SQs.

5.3.11 Given the lack of available green space, the CMM supports SQs that are houses with private gardens. For this reason, there are no apartment SQs. Gardening services are provided by the Mission, making use of the two full-time gardening positions. Services provided are for landscape maintenance, maintenance of any irrigation systems, watering of plants and trees, mowing, cultivation and weeding, application of fertilizers and pesticides, cleaning of gutters, cleaning of rubbish, leaves, branches and occasional pruning of trees and vines. The Gardeners visit each SQ once per week to undertake these tasks.

5.3.12 Departmental guidelines provide for gardening assistance only where the garden area exceeds 660 square metres, and provides also for tree pruning, provision of earth and some gardening materials. Mission files indicated that no cost recovery is being done, and there was no evidence of a formula calculation having been done for each SQ that would justify the lack of cost-recovery.

Recommendations for the Mission

- 5.3.13 Confirm doubtful measurements, and then seek appropriate authority for those staff quarters, if any, that exceed space guidelines.**
- 5.3.14 Communicate utilities consumption to the CBS.**
- 5.3.15 Recover costs for gardening fees based on the prescribed formula.**

Mission Responses

- 5.3.13 Measurements have been confirmed. Mission has one (representational) SQ that exceeds HOM authority and retroactive approval from SRD is being sought.**
- 5.3.14 Utility consumption has been communicated to the CBS and the Mission will follow up with suggestions for energy saving practices.**
- 5.3.15 Following consultation with SRD, guidelines have been established for recovery of gardening costs.**

Housing Committee

5.3.16 The Housing Committee is quite active and membership represents almost all Programs at the Mission. The Committee actively participated in the search for a new SQ for the additional CIC officer recently arrived and worked hard to approve houses that were more in line with TB guidelines. Some OGD personnel insisted on occupying the SQ of their predecessor, referring to a particular house as the OGD-specific SQ due to it being recently or historically occupied by a particular OGD or Program. This practice, if followed, reduces flexibility in managing the inventory, which can lead to over or under-housing of CBS and families. The Housing Committee should not consider this as a factor when allocating SQs.

5.3.17 It is recognized that the cost of fit-up is usually high. As an example, the newly acquired SQ cost nearly \$20,000 in fit-up. This cannot normally be recouped within a three year lease period, especially as newer leases tend to have higher rent. This argument supports retaining some of the older leased properties within the inventory, even if they are larger, as these are at lower rental rates and the fit-up is a sunk cost. Nonetheless, more recently constructed houses usually offer greater efficiency of systems with potentially less fit-up and maintenance.

Recommendation for the Mission

- 5.3.18 Continue to seek housing that reflects TB guidelines, including exploring the option of leasing apartment SQs.**

Mission Response

- 5.3.18 The Mission will continue to ensure that acquisition of new SQs reflect TB guidelines while taking into account rental, fit-up, energy costs, etc. As well, apartments are being considered as an option to houses, and the Housing Committee has visited several apartments already.**

Work Orders

5.3.19 Work orders are submitted to Administration by e-mail, hard copy or occasionally by telephone. Some CBS mentioned there was sometimes no feedback from Administration on work order actioning/scheduling. The Office Manager recognized the importance of communicating with clients, both before and after work is done, and also the weakness of accepting work orders over the telephone. A written record is better for both the client and Administration, and the Office Manager had already elevated this concern to the MCO.

5.4 Finance

Management of the Function

5.4.1 Services are being delivered in a satisfactory manner, but some controls should be strengthened to improve financial management at the Mission. The MCO is the Mission Financial Officer and is assisted by one Accountant (LE-05). The classification level of this position appeared to be low to the Audit Team given the statement of responsibilities.

5.4.2 There are regular interruptions within the Accounting Section because it has no set hours or service standards for dealing with its clients. This leads to a break in concentration and increases the risk of error when processing transactions. Also, there is no Dutch door for the Accountant's office that restricts access.

5.4.3 The Administration Section works as a team and there is a high level of trust between the employees. Because of that element of trust, internal controls that reflect departmental procedure and practice have not been put in place. The Accountant and the Office Manager have shared access and control of Official Receipts, cheque books, gas coupons and petty cash. As a rule, those items are

usually controlled by the MCO with appropriate working supplies provided to the Accountant and the Office Manager. ***

5.4.4 SIXP conducted a detailed review of the Mission financial accounts and the results of its review is the subject of a separate report to the Mission.

Recommendations for the Mission

5.4.5 Establish pre-set office hours for the Accountant and limit access to the Accounts area.

5.4.6 Store items such as official receipts and gas coupons appropriately, and designate one individual responsible for these items.

Mission Response

5.4.5 The office of the Accountant has been refitted to limit access, and office hours have been established for the Accountant in conjunction with the new Service Standards.

5.4.6 ***

Mission Financial Officer

5.4.7 The Office Manager has delegated authority and acts as the Mission Financial Officer during the MCO's absence. She has signing authority under Sections 32 and 34 of the Financial Administration Act (FAA) and can also sign cheques. A CBS should be designated Mission Financial Officer during the MCO's absence.

Hospitality

5.4.8 The MCO is not currently being provided with supporting documents for hospitality claims, as per Departmental regulations. Without supporting documentation, the MCO cannot properly sign to certify Section 33. A number of "All Staff, Only Staff" events charged to various Programs were noted. These types of events should be rare and require HOM authorization. Those sampled appeared reasonable and were of low cost. Additionally, the Mission does not have a gift register. All staff should be familiar with the rules governing gifts, and all gifts should be registered.

Recommendations for the Mission

5.4.9 Those claiming hospitality expenditures, including the HOM, must attach supporting documentation to the claim.

5.4.10 A gift register should be established for use by all Mission staff.

Mission Response

5.4.9 All hospitality claims now have supporting documentation attached.

5.4.10 In addition to the individual registering gifts received in their personal hospitality files, a central gift registry has been established on the Embassy Common Directory.

Banking Services

5.4.11 The cheques currently being provided by the bank to the Mission do not interface with the IMS system and, therefore, manual cheques must be issued. The general preference for the Department is for Missions to produce electronically printed cheques. Discussions directly with the bank have taken place in the past to try to solve this problem but without success. Although there may be some resistance, the Mission is encouraged to continue making every effort to have the bank provide cheques that can be used with the system. Representations by the HOM directly to senior management at the bank may prove more influential. Alternatively, the Mission should discuss this topic with SMFF to see if the problem can be addressed in another way.

Receipt of Immigration Revenues

5.4.12 ***

Contracting

5.4.18 There is no Contract Review Board at the Mission, but all large contracts are reviewed by the CMM. Minutes of CMMs revealed that recommendations on contracts were presented to the members and only briefly reviewed. Minor value contracts do not need committee review but all personal services contracts, especially where dependants are candidates, should be reviewed regardless of the contract value. A Contract Review Board comprised of three officers, including the MCO, should be formed to review all personal service contracts and other contracts over a reasonable threshold.

Recommendation for the Mission

5.4.19 Form a Contract Review Board to review significant contracts and all personal services contracts.

Mission Response

5.4.19 A Contract Review Board has been established by the CMM and reviews all contract with a value exceeding \$5,000.

5.5 Information Management

Management of the Program

5.5.1 Informatics are managed by a newly hired LES System Administrator (SA) under the supervision of the MCO. Functionally, the SA reports to the Regional Systems Manager located in Paris. This employee began work just prior to the audit visit and had not yet had full training.

5.5.2 The SA provides various services to his clients both at the Chancery and at the Annex. He is prepared to take on many other related tasks, including OCTEL and CAIPS problems. Inventories of all computer assets are well maintained and data is stored and backed up as required. Surplus computers are on loan to CBS and LES, and as per regulations all home loans are supported by a signed loan agreement.

5.5.3 There is a high level of satisfaction with SIGNET at the Mission and most officers are using it effectively for program delivery. There are two C4 workstations for the HOM and the HOM Secretary and also one stand-alone C4 for the Political Officer. The Mission ensures that all new staff have the appropriate security clearance before issuing a SIGNET account.

5.5.4 One English workstation is used at the Mission for the LE\$PAY system. This system cannot be installed on the Accountant's workstation because her unit is set on French language mode. The LE\$PAY system has the same problem as PRIME, in that it is fully bilingual only when running on an English workstation. This problem is identified in the Consolidated Support Manual. This issue has been flagged to both SXD and SMFF.

5.5.5 The Mission does not have a Technology Committee to discuss subjects in this area. The HOM Secretary has been appointed COMSEC custodian and the MCO is the Deputy custodian. Both of them should sign the COMSEC certificates (EXT-688 and EXT-300).

5.5.6 A Mission web site is under construction and can be found on the Mission [i:] drive. The LES Trade Officer has been designated responsible for the design of the web site. The Administration Section frequently uses the [i:] drive to share documents and information, viewed as a best practice.

MISSION RESOURCES FACT SHEET

Human Resources (FTEs)

PROGRAM	CBS	LES	TOTAL
HOM Office	2	4	6
IBD	1	4	5
General Relations	1	1	2
Development	1	2	3
Immigration	2	6	8
Solicitor General	1	1	2
Consular	0	1	1
Administration	1	25	26
Total	9	44	53

Physical Resources

ASSETS	OWNED	LEASED
Chancery	0	1 + Annex
OR	0	1
SQs	0	8
Vehicles	7*	0

*One Recreation Vehicle

Financial Information 2000/2001

Operating Budget (N001)	\$750,040
LES Salaries (N012)	856,401
CBS Overtime (N011)	13,500
Capital (N005)	118,400
Total	\$1,738,341