



AUDIT OF THE CANADIAN EMBASSY BANGKOK

November 2006

**Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade
Office of the Inspector General
Audit Division (ZIV)**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An audit of the General Relations (GR), the International Business Development (IBD), the Consular and Administration Programs was conducted in Bangkok from November 23 to 29, 2005. These Programs were last audited in June 2001.

Thailand is one of the "Big-5" Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), playing a central role in the politics and development of Southeast Asia. Bangkok itself is a large, bustling metropolis with a population of approximately twelve million people. Canada as a country is not well-known in Thailand, and the Mission would benefit from more Ministerial or other political level attention. While such visits are no guarantee of success in furthering Canadian interests, they are seen as necessary in the local culture.

The Mission is well managed and is benefiting from the leadership of an *** Head of Mission (HOM) and *** program managers. The quality of the Locally Engaged Staff (LES) is high and the Mission functions smoothly. The tsunami of December 26, 2004 had a major impact on the work of the Mission for an extended period of time, with follow-up activities not concluding until August 2005. The Mission managed the crisis in an exceptional manner.

The General Relations program has effective plans in place, that are achievable given current resources. However, the Program is under constant pressure to do more, such as monitoring and reporting on the situation in southern Thailand, Burma (Myanmar) and Laos. The Program is faced with significant resource limitations with no support positions in the Section. The Audit Team supports the request for the creation of two LES positions. The additional capacity would also enable the Section to carry out important work in the cultural and academic sectors. Without these resources, the GR Section will need to align its priorities and programming workload with available resources. It is recommended that the Mission develop a country strategy for Burma (Myanmar) and Laos and that it explore whether adding an Honorary Consul in the southern provinces of Thailand would be useful given the increasing focus on this region.

The International Business Development Program is well managed with good direction and leadership from the Commercial Program Manager (CPM). There has been some strain on the Program recently as a result of the CPM acting as Chargé in Bangkok and Brunei, but the team has been able to cope reasonably well. Only fine-tuning in certain areas is necessary, such as the addition of measurement mechanisms in strategic planning documents, and the use by all officers of sector strategy plans.

The Consular Program provides good service, maintaining Departmental service levels while experiencing heavy workloads. The Program is responsible for providing consular services to Canadians in Thailand, Laos, and Burma (Myanmar),

while also providing advice and guidance to our mission in Cambodia. The Consular team was officially recognized for their response to the tsunami. Controls that need to be strengthened include the reviewing of original passport documentation by a Canada Based Staff (CBS), witnessing passport inventory counts and updating expired Registry of Canadians Abroad (ROCA).

The Administration Program works effectively, headed by an *** MCO, and supported by knowledgeable staff. Appropriate policies and procedures are in place. Communications within the Section are generally good, though there is some need to augment communication within certain subsections such as Information Technology (IT) and Transportation. Client relations are good and the MCO and DMCO are now focussing on creating more detailed plans for functions such as Physical Resources and Human Resources.

A total of 43 audit recommendations are raised in the report; 41 are addressed to the Mission and two are addressed to Headquarters (HQ). Management has responded to each recommendation indicating action already taken or decisions made, as well as future action. Of the 43 recommendations, management has stated that 31 recommendations have been implemented. For each of the remaining 12 recommendations, management has indicated the initiatives in progress or the intended future action.

SCOPE, OBJECTIVES, MISSION RESOURCES

Audit Scope and Objectives

The scope of the audit included a review of Mission Management and the General Relations (GR), the International Business Development (IBD), Consular and Administration Programs.

The audit objectives were to:

- assess management controls and systems, procedures and activities that make up the program;
- determine the extent of compliance with legislation, regulations and operating policies;
- assess the reliability and adequacy of information available for decision-making and accountability purposes;
- ensure resources are judiciously used and that the Department is receiving value-for-money; and,
- make recommendations, where warranted, to improve the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of programs.

The focus and extent of on-site work is based on an assessment of materiality and related risk. This is done through communication with Headquarters (HQ) bureaux, including briefings by line management and the functional bureaux, review of relevant HQ and mission documentation, and past audit findings, and an analysis of recurring trends and systemic issues.

During the audit, audit issues and lines of enquiry are further refined from information gathered through interviews with the Head of Mission and Program Managers, a meeting with the Locally-engaged Staff Committee, individual interviews with staff, and results of other documentation reviewed.

The level of audit work for a given area is therefore based on issues and information identified and gathered at all levels, HQ, mission management, and mission operations. Occasionally, due to time limitations or other factors, it is not possible to provide audit coverage for all areas.

MISSION RESOURCES FACT SHEET

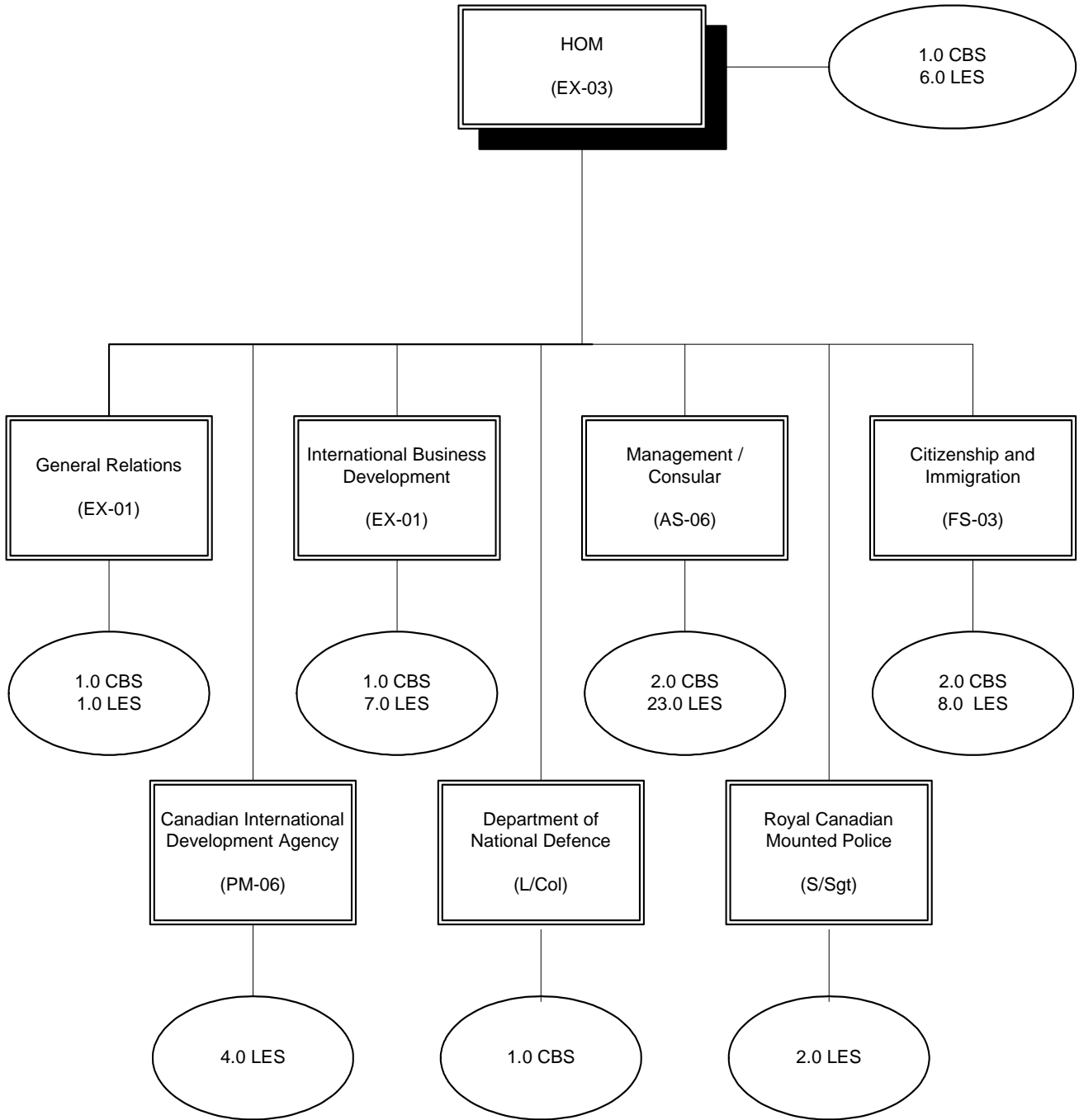
Physical Resources

Assets	Crown Leased	Crown Owned
Chancery	1	0
Official Residence	1	0
Staff Quarters	15	0
Vehicles	0	7

Financial Information 2004/05

Operating Budget (N001)	\$2,102,603
Capital Budget (N005)	146,970
CBS Overtime Salaries Budget (N011)	20,000
LES Salaries Budget (N012)	1,023,813
Total	\$3,293,386

Organization Chart



MISSION MANAGEMENT

1.1 Overview

1.1.1 This is a well run mission headed by an *** HOM, with a strong management team and knowledgeable LES. Program integration and teamwork are evident and this was particularly displayed during the Mission's response to the tsunami crisis. The tsunami was a major challenge that consumed much of the staff's time from December 2004 until the closing of the temporary Phuket office in August 2005. At the time of the Audit field work, the Mission was preparing for the first memorial of the disaster.

1.1.2 Staff indicated that morale within the Mission is high. Communications between Programs and within the Mission are good and there is an effective committee structure in place. The Operations Committee meets weekly and the Committee on Mission Management (CMM) meets quarterly and both committees circulate meeting minutes to staff. All staff town-hall meetings are held quarterly. Other committees include the LES Committee, Housing Committee, Health and Safety Committee, Contract Review Board, and Classification Committee. These committees are functioning well with equitable participation by all CBS.

1.1.3 A new LES Committee has recently been elected and is representative of all programs and employee groups, including non-office staff. While communication between Mission management and the LES staff complement overall is good, it is recommended that a schedule of regular meetings be formalized, with agendas established in advance and minutes taken and distributed to all staff.

1.1.4 Performance review and development are taken seriously at the Mission with appraisals current at the time of the Audit and the Performance Management Program (PMP) rolled out in April 2005. However, a review of position descriptions indicated that a number had not been updated since as far back as 1996. Position descriptions should be continuously reviewed as responsibilities change. As a best practice, it is recommended that managers review position descriptions with employees when reviewing the PMP, and that both the manager and employee sign the position description after this review. The Mission has established a Training Committee, responsible for the development of a training plan, but the Committee has not yet developed a plan as the Chair of the Committee was away on temporary duty.

Recommendations for the Mission

1.1.5 A schedule of regular meetings should be formalized between the LES Committee and management, with agendas established in advance and minutes kept and distributed to all staff.

1.1.6 Position descriptions should be regularly updated as duties change and reviewed as a part of the PMP process.

1.1.7 A comprehensive training plan should be developed.

Mission Actions and Timeframes

1.1.5 A quarterly schedule of meetings has already been established. Ad hoc meetings will also take place as needed. Minutes of the meeting will be taken and circulated to staff

1.1.6 All job descriptions will be reviewed and updated as required by the end of this Fiscal Year.

1.1.7 The Mission has several elements of a training plan. The Mission has provided a variety of training opportunities and currently provides French language training for all staff. A comprehensive Mission training plan will be developed by end of this Fiscal Year.

GENERAL RELATIONS PROGRAM

2.1 Overview

2.1.1 The General Relations (GR) Program is managed by an FS-02 Counsellor (Political/Economic), who is serving in an EX-01 position. He is also the Mission Security Officer (MSO). The Program is supported by one CBS Political Officer (FS-02) and one LES Public Affairs Officer (LE-08).

2.1.2 The Program covers Thailand, Laos and Burma. The two Political Officers have shared responsibility for Thailand and each officer covers one of the other countries; either Laos or Burma (Myanmar). The junior Political Officer is responsible for tracking political, economic and social developments, human rights and refugee issues, and participating in the development of a Public Diplomacy strategy. The Public Affairs Officer is responsible for the cultural and academic sectors, press reviews and public affairs events.

2.1.3 Thailand's political stability and economic growth are being monitored with respect to governance, the situation in the deep south of Thailand, as well as the avian flu situation. The Mission is also faced with challenging political and economic realities in Burma (Myanmar) and Laos.

2.2 Management of the Program

2.2.1 The Program is well-managed and focussed given its resource limitation. It has lost 40% of a shared assistant position with the RCMP, a portion of the HOM Assistant and a portion of the Social Secretary in recent years. This has resulted in an imbalance of resources with two CBS, one LES (LE-08) and no lower level positions in the Section. This leaves the junior Political Officer responsible for administrative tasks such as organizing visits, meetings and seminars.

2.2.2 Communications within the Section are good. Staff meetings are held weekly. Roles and responsibilities have been defined and objectives have been identified for each employee.

2.2.3 There has been good collaboration between mission programs in the past but there needs to be more joint programming efforts with the Trade Section. Trade and GR worked more closely prior to the Tsunami, but with the work generated by this crisis, the Programs have not been able to sustain coordinated planning. The GR Program should now focus more on re-establishing this relationship to further its work on the Mission Communication Plan as well as the mission-wide Public Diplomacy Strategy. A Mission Communications Committee has been established and should now meet more frequently to facilitate strategy development and implementation. This will enable the Mission to develop a "whole of Government" approach.

Recommendation for the Mission

- 2.2.4 The GR and Trade Programs should work jointly to finalize and implement the Mission Communication strategy as well as the Public Diplomacy strategy.**

Mission Action and Timeframe

- 2.2.4 The Mission's Public Diplomacy Committee will be re-jigged in September 2006 after the arrival of the new Officers. We will finalise our Communications strategy by the end of the calendar year. A Public Diplomacy strategy is already in place.**

2.3 Planning

2.3.1 The GR work is largely reactive. While the Section has set out plans for its program, which are achievable with current resources, it is under constant pressure to do more. The Mission envisages a number of events that could affect resources:

- With CIDA's Aid Program sun-setting in March 2006, the Canada Fund could move from CIDA to GR;
- It is expected that there will be enhanced coverage and programming pertaining to Burma (Myanmar); and,
- There is increasing attention to Thailand's southern issues.

In addition, Bangkok is now becoming a major hub for international conferences and regional meetings, which makes for a significant increase of the GR Section's workload.

2.3.2 The Political Officers conduct regular visits to Burma (Myanmar) and Laos. The HOM has visited Burma (Myanmar) on a number of occasions as well. While there are no country strategies in place for these countries, the Mission has developed and maintains good relations with key contacts in these regions. The Mission should work closely with HQ to develop country strategies for Burma (Myanmar) and Laos and define roles and responsibilities of the Mission with respect to these countries.

2.3.3 With increasing focus on the southern provinces, the Mission, in consultation with HQ, should explore whether adding an Honorary Consul in this region would present a useful vehicle to build contacts in the southern communities. An Honorary Consul, whose primary focus would be the GR agenda, would also provide a perspective on a region that the Mission currently does not have.

Recommendations for the Mission

- 2.3.4 The Mission, in consultation with Asia South and Pacific Bureau (RAD), should develop country strategies for Burma (Myanmar) and Laos.**
- 2.3.5 The Mission, in consultation with RAD, should explore opportunities for adding an Honorary Consul in the southern provinces.**

Mission Actions and Timeframes

- 2.3.4 While we will follow the recommendation of RAD, our feeling is that the relationship with Lao is neither broad enough nor deep enough to warrant a separate country strategy, particularly seeing that Laos is not a focus for any of the Mission priorities. While Human Rights and Democratization in Burma (Myanmar) is a Mission priority, the relationship with Burma (Myanmar) is not a multifaceted one which demands a separate country strategy.**
- 2.3.5 We fully support this recommendation and are prepared, upon being given the go-ahead by HQ to begin the process of identifying a suitable candidate to act as Honorary Consul in the deep south. Because of our increased activity in the south this Fiscal Year, we have more prominent local contacts, and have a number of people we could consider for this position . Having an Honorary Consul in the South would facilitate our work and provide us with on the ground source of information on developments there.**

2.4 Resources

2.4.1 The GR Section is faced with important resource limitations and will need to align resources with priorities and programming workload. Based on comparable missions in the region, the number of positions in the GR Section is low. The Mission was unsuccessful with its request in August 2005 for two additional LES positions in the Section; one LE-07 Officer and one LE-05 Assistant. This request was based on converting two vacant Driver positions and using the savings from the deleted 40% shared CBS position with the RCMP to fund two new positions.

2.4.2 Provided that the situation in Thailand and in both countries of accreditation remains stable or grows, the Audit Team supports the request for two new positions and views the staffing of these positions as a priority to increase the capacity of the GR Section. As well, the Section should develop a succession plan given that the Public Affairs Officer will be leaving within the next few years.

Recommendations for the Mission

- 2.4.3 The Mission should put forward a request in its country strategy for two additional resources in the GR Section.**
- 2.4.4 The General Relations Section should develop a succession plan to fill the Public Affairs Officer's position once the incumbent departs.**

Mission Actions and Timeframes

- 2.4.3 We have requested HQ to add two positions, one officer and one support. The officer position was approved, a competition was held, and the new officer began work on July 4, 2006. We will apply again for support position for next Fiscal Year.**
- 2.4.4 We have raised the issue of the incumbent's departure with Administration and with the officer. She will consider the issue and get back to us with a possible timeframe by the Fall. This will then enable us to articulate a clear succession plan.**

2.5 Public Diplomacy

2.5.1 In 2004, A.C. Nielson conducted a survey in Thailand which concluded that there was a very low awareness of Canada amongst Thais within the demographic of interest. This demonstrated the need for the Mission to raise Canada's profile in Thailand and develop objectives to achieve this result. The Mission has since developed, in consultation with other Mission programs, a Communication Plan including objectives, a target audience, and a strategy to increase the public's awareness of Canada in Thailand. However, it is important that the Communication Plan be aligned with the public diplomacy strategy objectives. As with many missions, this Mission feels it would benefit considerably from an increased number of visits on the political level or from senior Government Officials. These visits could be leveraged to build Canada's image and to help drive the advocacy priorities.

2.6 Public Affairs

2.6.1 While the Public Affairs Officer's job description also includes cultural and academic sectors, the Program has focussed primarily on media relations. The Mission has leveraged Canadian cultural and entertainment visits to Thailand to generate profile, however the Program feels it could do more in the cultural and academic sectors with additional resources. Due to the shortage of resources in the Section, the Public Affairs Officer is required to conduct administrative duties such as making travel arrangements for Political Officers. Media scanning is time consuming given that there are no CBS with fluent Thai language capability in the Mission and that there is no

translator. The Audit Team recommended that the Mission explore options to out-source media scanning and that the cost be shared with missions from like-minded countries. During the Audit, the Mission was able to make arrangements with the US Embassy to have a shared service. With the reduction in workload related to media scanning, the Public Affairs Officer can now devote more time to the cultural and academic sectors.

2.6.2 There is a need to increase out-calls with the local media to build key contacts. In light of this, the Program has established a given number of media contacts for each quarter. The Program Manager (PM) and/or Political Officer should provide training/mentoring to the Public Affairs Officer with respect to conducting out-calls.

Recommendations for the Mission

2.6.4 **The Public Affairs Officer should allocate more time to the cultural and academic sectors. The Program should determine the optimal balance of these sectors among the three Officers based on priorities and objectives, and then develop a work-plan which could be used as the basis for development of the PMP.**

2.6.5 **The PM and/or Political Officer should provide training/mentoring to the Public Affairs Officer with respect to conducting outcalls.**

Mission Actions and Timeframes

2.6.4 **This is something that the PERPA section would like to do, but as identified by the Audit, we have been substantially understaffed. With the arrival of the new Political Officer we should be able to conduct our core Political and media work in a more sustainable way. Once we have a fifth staff member we can undertake more cultural/academic work. Realistically speaking, that will have to wait for the next Fiscal Year.**

Over the past three years we have been very successful in choosing a very small number of very highly leveraged cultural events to participate in (using Bangkok International Film Festival or Canadian pop concerts as platforms for example). Even this workload was not sustainable, but with a fourth staff member we will now be able to continue this for the coming year.

2.6.5 **We have given the Public Affairs Officer substantial Public Diplomacy training in Canada and Thailand, including mentoring by an experienced counterpart in another regional mission. We will**

break down the job further into its components, and one area that we will focus on will be outcalls. We have set a target of one call per week and will review on a quarterly basis for one quarter. If that is unsatisfactory, we will move to weekly review. (First review July 10, 2006).

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

3.1 Overview

3.1.1 The IBD Program is delivered by a team of two Canada-based (CBS) and three locally-engaged Trade Commissioners, and four Assistants. The Commercial Program Manager (CPM) is an *** FS-03 officer acting in an EX-01 position. The Program is responsible for commercial development in Thailand, Laos, and Burma (Myanmar). Both the CPM as well as the other CBS Trade Commissioner will be departing the Mission this coming summer.

3.1.2 Thailand is not a priority country, however, Canadian exports are in excess of \$500 million annually and there is a broad selection of clients active in the market. The market has recovered to a large extent from the 1997 financial crisis and the government is now considering a US \$40 billion five-year infrastructure plan in the transport, energy, urban transit, health and telecommunication sectors.

3.1.3 The Program is reasonably well resourced. It has a budget of \$16,000 for travel, \$10,550 for hospitality, \$30,000 for the Client Service Fund (CSF), and \$4,000 in additional funds allocated from Agriculture and Agrifood Canada (AAFC).

3.2 Management of the Program

3.2.1 The IBD program is active and led by a strong CPM who is well supported by the HOM. The loss of a FS-02 position in 2004 has forced the Program to reorganise its priority sectors. ***. The CPM has acted as Chargé both in Bangkok, and in Brunei, which has put some strain on the program. However, the junior FS officer has enthusiastically taken on an acting role in the section and works well with the CPM.

3.2.2 The Mission has adapted to the loss of the FS position and adjusted its workload accordingly. Resources are adequate for the current workload. However, if opportunities materialise in large infrastructure projects, there may not be enough capacity in the section.

3.2.3 Currently there is an LE-05 Trade Commissioner Assistant who manages the InfoCentre and provides administrative support to the CPM. The position was reviewed by the Mission Classification Review Committee and it was recommended that the position be reclassified to LE-06. This is consistent with other positions carrying out similar duties at other missions in the region. Reclassifications, however, are on hold pending budgetary negotiations in Headquarters.

3.3 Planning

3.3.1 The Program has a good approach to planning and has focussed its work around six priority sectors. Some officers have developed a useful sector strategy in order to further refine the sector objectives stated in the Program's annual Business Plan. The first part of the strategy document serves a dual purpose of providing information to the Program and its external clients alike, including a market overview, market access issues, and a list of key trade shows. The "Objectives and Strategic Action Plan" section provides the officer with a workplan which details a list of activities for the year that flow from the sector's objectives. Measurement of results, however, has not been integrated into the strategy documents. By adding measurement mechanisms for each objective, the sector strategies would allow for a more structured evaluation of results achieved and assist in future planning adjustment for the sector.

3.3.2 Through its business planning process, the Program has also developed a number of proposals that use the Mission's strategic reserve and has made good use of this additional source of funding. In addition to the basic proposal requirements, the Program has included a risk analysis of each initiative. Other programs in the Mission may wish to consider using this risk-based approach in utilizing strategic reserve funds.

Recommendation for the Mission

3.3.3 The Program should agree upon and implement a standard template for sector strategies for each officer to use in their sectors. Measurement mechanisms for the stated objectives should be included.

Mission Action and Timeframe

3.3.3 A regional sector strategy and action plan has been completed for the Agri-food sector with the support of the regional Agri-food team. Throughout this year, the new Senior Trade Commissioner will work with staff to develop and implement sector strategies and measurement mechanisms for all key sectors identified in the International Business Development (IBD) plan. The Agri-food plan could be used as an example or template. The sector strategies will be completed before the next fiscal year IBD planning (2007-2008).

3.4 Operations

3.4.1 Communication and teamwork within the program have been improving, due in large part to the restructuring of reporting relationships and the efforts of the CPM. The emphasis on improving communication between staff should continue. Two functions in particular that would benefit are the planning and delivery of sector

strategies. Officers are not always working together on issues that cross and overlap sectors, which could result in missed opportunities or duplication. A more integrated and team-based approach to sector planning of complementary sectors would be beneficial.

3.4.2 The Program is making a concerted effort to increase its outcall and outreach activities. However, the approach is not always strategic in nature and results are not measured or evaluated. By including an outreach/outcall strategy as part of each officer's sector strategy and workplan, the Program will be able to more effectively use its resources.

3.4.3 Staff have not been tracking all their activities in WIN Exports, and as a result, the statistics for the Mission give a false impression of the extent of work actually being performed. The Program should attempt to increase the input into WIN Exports in order to better reflect their level of activity.

Recommendations for the Mission

3.4.4 **Officers with overlapping sectors should work together to develop an integrated approach to carrying out their sector work.**

3.4.5 **The Program should include an outreach/outcall strategy as part of each sector strategy.**

3.4.6 **The Program should develop a strategy to increase their input into WIN Exports.**

Mission Actions and Timeframes

3.4.4 **In staff meetings we have discussed the importance of working closely as a team especially in sectors that overlap. Officers are encouraged to discuss certain cases together and develop strategies to find the best way to serve the client. We will continue to work on this on an ongoing basis to ensure co-ordination between officers in overlapping sectors. Specific strategy meetings will be held with each officer to discuss and develop key sector strategies.**

Mission comment: The Mission is now in the process of realigning sectors to eliminate overlaps, in order to allow officers to focus more effectively on our priority sectors. We have instituted a system of "backups" between officers and assistants to cover periods where officers might be absent from the office. This approach will permit continuity of service, enrich the job packages of assistants and possibly assist in succession planning.

3.4.5 As indicated in response 3.3.3, a sector strategy will be developed for each key sector. Outcalls and outreach will be an important part of each strategy. These strategies will be completed in time for 2007-2008 IBD planning and the targeted outreach and outcall strategy will be implemented throughout the next fiscal year.

Mission comment: The Mission has also instituted a program of more strictly measuring, on a monthly, quarterly and annual basis our service and activity levels. These measures will be used to develop benchmarks of performance for officer and assistant Performance Management Agreements in the future. These measures have reinforced with all personnel the importance which the CPM attaches to input of data into WIN, and should position the Mission well for the arrival of TRIO (likely in February 2007).

3.4.6 After discussing the importance of WIN tracking in several staff meetings in 2006, staff have already been much more diligent in doing WIN Export inputs this year. This will continue to be reinforced as a key component of tracking our work and will be especially important during the transition period when the two new CBS start in summer 2006 so that they can quickly get up to speed on files. We anticipate that with the implementation of TRIO in the coming year that the program will be better equipped to track our service delivery.

CONSULAR PROGRAM

4.1 Overview

4.1.1 The Consular Program is extremely busy, with responsibility for Thailand, Laos and Burma (Myanmar), while also providing support and guidance to the mission in Cambodia on consular issues. The Australian Embassy assists in servicing Canadian Consular clients in Burma and there is an Honorary Consul located in Chiang Mai, in Northern Thailand. The MCO is responsible for the program, which is managed by one of the two Deputy Management/Consular Officers (DMCO). The team also includes three Consular Officers (LE-08) and two Consular Assistants (LE-06 and LE-05), with two of the staff responsible for the delivery of passport services and the other three focussing on consular responsibilities. There is generally good communication within the Consular team, however, monthly all-Program meetings and bi-weekly section meetings would be useful to ensure there are regular forums for discussions.

4.1.2 The Program is working well. Staff are knowledgeable and client service oriented, providing services to clients in a timely fashion. The December 26, 2004 tsunami was an extremely challenging crisis that the Program and the Mission as a whole handled well. The Mission has used this experience to refine plans and procedures, such as further developing the emergency kit for use in other locations that was put together before the Tsunami. Systems and controls are in place and assets such as passport blanks and consular revenues are adequately safeguarded. The Mission has an extremely well developed Avian Influenza Contingency Plan, that is being used by other missions as a template.

4.1.3 Annually, the Mission provides 1200 passport services and handles 110 citizenship applications and 900 notarial requests. The Registration of Canadians Abroad (ROCA) system indicates there are 1900 Canadians registered in the Mission's areas of accreditation (out of an estimated 4500). The number of Canadians visiting Thailand has been increasing with over 130,000 visiting each year.

Recommendation for the Mission

4.1.4 The Mission should establish regular staff meetings for the both the Consular and Passport groups and for the Program as a whole.

Mission Action and Timeframe

4.1.4 The Consular Section has since established regular staff meetings. Minutes are kept and circulated for each meeting.

4.1.5 ***

Recommendation for the Mission

- 4.1.6** The Mission should retain the original proof of citizenship documentation so it can be used for verification at the approval stage in the passport process.

Mission Action and Timeframe

- 4.1.6** Verification process has been changed to ensure that original proof of citizenship is verified by CBS during approval process.

4.1.7 While processes and procedures within the Program are good, improvements can be made by implementing the following recommendations:

Recommendations for the Mission

- 4.1.8** Two CBS should participate in the monthly reconciliation of the passport inventory and the receipt of passport inventory . Both individuals should sign the form.

- 4.1.9** The Mission should follow-up on ROCA registrants with expired dates to either remove them from the database or up-date their departure date.

- 4.1.10** The Mission should consider expanding its survey of clients to obtain more feedback on services provided.

Mission Actions and Timeframes

- 4.1.8** The Consular section now counts the monthly passport inventory with 2 CBS present in addition to the usual quarterly count with the HOM.

- 4.1.9** The Consular section has been actively encouraging Canadians to update their information regarding their registration. As a result, ROCA lists have been updated and are kept updated. Recent improvements to the ROCA system have been adopted.

- 4.1.10** Bilingual feedback forms have been visibly displayed in the Consular section and a box is available to anonymously deposit the completed forms.

Recommendation for Passport Canada

- 4.1.11** In conjunction with the COSMOS support team, Passport Canada should examine if the passport inventory report can be reformatted so that inventories located at different missions can be identified separately to make reconciliations more efficient.

Passport Canada Action and Timeframe

- 4.1.11** Passport Canada (PPTC) and Consular Technical Support (CNC) have been working together to improve the COSMOS PMP inventory module. PPTC has requested a change in the module which will allow missions to electronically assign specific inventory to another mission under their supervision. This information will be reflected in the passport inventory report used for monthly reconciliation. We will follow up with the CR number when it is available.

ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM

5.1 Management of the Program

5.1.1 The Program is running very well, with well established processes and control structures and up-to-date files. Staff indicated that the Program provides good services. The Program is managed by an *** MCO (AS-06) who directly oversees the Finance and HR Sections. There are two DMCOs (AS-04s). One manages Property and IT, while the other is responsible for the Consular Program.

5.1.2 The three MCOs meet weekly prior to the meeting of the Mission's Operations Committee. Coaching is being provided by the MCO to the DMCOs, both on their first posting. The Mission plans to provide cross-training to the two DMCOs by having them switch program responsibilities for a year. To further augment this training, it would be useful if the Mission developed a formal mentoring plan to ensure that the DMCOs gain experience in such activities as bank reconciliation review and attendance at CMM meetings.

Recommendation for the Mission

5.1.3 The Mission should develop a mentoring plan to expose the DMCOs to activities outside their normal duties.

Mission Action and Timeframe

5.1.3 The two DMCOs will be swapping positions effective July 1, 2006. Though no formal mentoring plans have been developed, the MCO has regularly assigned finance and HR duties to both DMCOs. This will continue to be the case on a more frequent basis. The DMCOs attended the most recent CMM meeting and will be invited to future meetings as well.

5.1.4 The staffing complement of three MCOs is necessary at this post given the demands of the Consular Program. Headquarters may wish to evaluate if this Mission could be used to provide some support to other Missions in the region that may not yet be adequately resourced. This evaluation could include acting as a hub mission for certain activities to providing personnel during absences or crises. All three MCOs will be leaving the Mission in the summer of 2007 and the timing of their departures will have to be managed carefully.

Mission Comment: The MCO has requested an extension until summer 2008. This request is supported by the HOM and should it be approved by HQ it would ensure continuity when the two D/MCOs leave in 2007. This Mission is able to

provide limited administrative support to a mission in the region and is ready to consider a proposal to this end.

5.1.5 Communications within the Program are generally good. However, within some sections there is a need to augment communications so that the entire group is up-to-date on plans and procedures. For example, there should be regular meetings between the DMCO, the Transport Manager and the Drivers. (A similar recommendation for the IT Section is made in paragraph 5.5.5).

Recommendation for the Mission

5.1.6 The Mission should establish regular staff meetings for the different sections in the Program.

Mission Action and Timeframe

5.1.6 Regular meetings with all Administration staff have been established. The DMCO now meets on a bi-weekly basis with both the Property/Materiel Assistants and the LEITP. Quarterly meetings with the drivers have been instituted as well.

5.2 Human Resources (HR)

5.2.1 Human Resources management at the Mission is the responsibility of the MCO, assisted by an LE-06 Assistant. The MCO is very active in addressing HR issues, and the function is well managed with performance appraisals complete, the Performance Management Program (PMP) rolled out, good files maintained, and relevant Committee structures in place.

5.2.2 A review of staffing actions was conducted and files were found to be well maintained and containing proper documentation. In a few instances, interview scoring sheets were not always retained and placed on file. The Mission also maintains good classification files but a number of reclassification actions have been outstanding for long periods of time, awaiting the action of SMC or RSA. A classification action involving the RCMP Assistant Position had been approved by the Classification Committee eight months before the Audit visit, but was still awaiting action by SMC. Overall, a good file structure is in place, with files for each employee and position number. Overtime and leave are also well tracked and controlled.

5.2.3 The Employee Handbook is dated 2002. Written confirmation of receipt has been maintained on employee files. The MCO prepared an updated package and sent it to HQ in February 2005, but has not yet had a reply from HLD. This review was not requested by HLD, and prior to the field work, the Audit Team was informed by HLD that the Mission is not due for a comprehensive benefits review until 2008. This date

needs to be clearly communicated to the Mission by HLD so that management can communicate the correct information to the LES Committee.

5.2.4 While the Mission has a reasonable Official Language capacity given the difficulty in finding French speaking LES, special attention needs to be paid to the capacity of those who work at the main reception. ***. Training should be offered and clear procedures should be established to ensure that clients receive a sufficient level of service in the Official Language of their choice.

Recommendations for the Mission

5.2.5 **Interview scoring sheets should be kept and placed on staffing action files.**

5.2.6 *****. Procedures should be developed for employees who service the public but do not have a working capacity in both Official Languages.**

Mission Actions and Timeframes

5.2.5 **Observation noted. Score sheets for all recent interviews have been compiled and kept on file**

5.2.6 **We have instituted a system whereby a group of employees (CBS and LES) with French language skills have been identified to handle transferred calls. The list with instructions is posted at the switchboard. The Mission has made French language lessons available to all LES during lunch hours over the past two years.**

Recommendation for HLD

5.2.7 **The date of the next comprehensive benefits survey should be communicated to Mission management.**

HLD Action and Timeframe

5.2.7 **HLD had established a benefits schedule to review benefits and handbooks of all missions around the world. Ideally each mission should be reviewed every 4 or 5 years and HLD is making every effort to meet this objective. In March 2002, a Handbook was produced for Bangkok. The HR benefits review for Bangkok was started and is in progress but unfortunately we cannot at this time provide a definite target completion date.**

5.3 Physical Resources

5.3.1 The Physical Resources Section is managed by the DMCO, who is on his first overseas assignment, assisted by three LE-05 assistants. The MCO meets regularly with the DMCO for mentoring purposes, but tries to maintain a hands off approach to daily operations, giving the DMCO autonomy to manage the Section. The DMCO has focussed his efforts on instituting more planning and structure for this function through the development of a capital replacement plan and the development of an improved work order system.

5.3.2 The Mission is well housed. The Chancery is located in modern commercial space and is suited to the needs of the Mission. There is an ongoing problem with the HVAC system which results in difficulty in properly regulating the temperature so that one section of the Chancery becomes hot in the afternoon. Both the Mission and SRD are aware of this issue and have been working closely with the landlord to try to resolve the problem quickly. The Crown leased Official Residence (OR) is suitable and functional and is used sufficiently and appropriately for official hospitality. The recent refurbishment of the OR was very successful. If an opportunity presents itself to purchase this property from the owner, it should be strongly considered.

5.3.3 The Staff Quarter (SQ) portfolio consists of 15 Crown-leased SQs, of which 14 are centrally located apartments, and one a small house. The Audit Team visited a sample of staff quarters and found them to be suitable and well maintained. The Mission Housing Committee is active and effective and has identified three SQs for disposal due to their age and increasing maintenance demands. The Audit Team concurred with the decision to release these three staff quarters, given the aforementioned deficiencies and comparability to the rest of portfolio. The SQ portfolio includes leases of one year, six months and three months in duration. In future negotiations, the Mission should attempt to decrease the advance payment terms to the extent possible.

5.3.4 The maintenance function is effectively managed with landlords held accountable for their obligations as per the lease agreements. More follow-up and control has been instituted with the implementation of the improved work order system. The Section is attempting to further control work requests by asking tenants to contact the Section for all work, even that to be performed by the landlord. Given landlord responsiveness, tenants sometimes contact the landlord directly with requests which results in difficulty controlling work and identifying problematic SQs. The DMCO and Property Assistant undertake annual inspections to identify necessary work. ***.

5.3.5 The DMCO should liaise more with other diplomatic missions to compare contractors and suppliers. More contact with his counterparts would give him an effective mechanism to compare prices and find new service providers which are accustomed to servicing an organization with similar needs. The Section should also try

to identify suppliers who can consolidate billing to limit the work involved in processing payments for both the Physical Resources and Accounting Sections. More effort should be made to consolidate purchasing to the extent possible. The capital replacement plan should assist in this regard.

Recommendations for the Mission

- 5.3.6** When negotiating future lease agreements, the terms of advance payment should be decreased as much as possible.
- 5.3.7** Annual property inspections should include ***.
- 5.3.8** The DMCO should maintain regular contact with other diplomatic missions to compare suppliers and contractors.
- 5.3.9** Purchasing should be consolidated to the extent possible.
- 5.3.10** The Mission should look for suppliers who can consolidate billing in order to decrease the number of individual transactions.

Mission Actions and Timeframes

- 5.3.6** Noted. Mission will endeavour to reduce advance payment terms, however these advance payments are utilised to obtain more favourable rental rates during lease negotiations.
- 5.3.7** Noted. ***.
- 5.3.8** Noted. DMCO has already initiated contact with colleagues from other diplomatic missions.
- 5.3.9** Noted. ***.
- 5.3.10** Noted. The Mission wherever possible is requesting that suppliers provide monthly invoices in order to reduce transactions.

5.4 Finance

5.4.1 Finance is well managed by the Financial Management Officer (FMO) who is the MCO, and assisted by an LE-07 Accountant and LE-05 Assistant Accountant. Staff are knowledgeable and the Mission accounts are well organized. ***.

5.4.2 Section 33 and 34 signing authorities are properly exercised and bank reconciliations are up-to-date. The work is distributed within the Section to allow for sufficient segregation of duties. Processes are in place to provide appropriate control over the receipt and payment of funds. Budgets are monitored closely for reporting and planning purposes. The Mission pays particular attention to the LES salary budget which has not always been sufficient to absorb increments for the current staff complement.

5.4.3 The following procedural recommendations are noted for action.

Recommendations for the Mission

- 5.4.4 **The MCO should undertake spot checks of transactions within IMS, such as SA adjustments, in addition to his monthly verifications.**
- 5.4.5 **The Assistant Accountant should do the bank reconciliation periodically to ensure that she is able to provide back-up for this function.**
- 5.4.6 **The MCO should review and sign the Asset and Liability Report on a monthly basis.**
- 5.4.7 **Hospitality diaries should include more detail regarding the purpose of the event, how it furthers the program's objectives, and the final assessment of the event.**
- 5.4.8 **Original documentation for the hospitality diaries should be kept by the Finance section and the photocopies returned to the officers rather than the reverse.**
- 5.4.9 **The Mission, in conjunction with HQ, should review the LES salary requirements to determine if the LES salary budget should be re-based.**

Mission Actions and Timeframes

- 5.4.4** The MCO's IMS account is activated and spot checks will be undertaken regularly.
- 5.4.5** Noted. The Senior Accountant has been instructed to expose her Assistant to some of her duties, including the bank reconciliation.
- 5.4.6** This observation was noted during the Audit Team debrief and is already being done on a monthly basis.
- 5.4.7** This observation was noted during the Audit Team debrief and instruction sent to all mission staff who have hospitality allocations on December 7, 2005.
- 5.4.8** Same as the response for 5.4.7.
- 5.4.9** This has been addressed in this year's reference levels.

5.5 Information Technology (IT)

- 5.5.1** The Information Technology function is under the direction of the MCO, though managed day-to-day by one of the two Deputy Management/Consular Officers (DMCO) at the Mission. There are two Locally Engaged Information Technology Professionals (LEITP), though one of the positions was vacant at the time of the Audit. Discussions with staff at the Mission revealed that ***.
- 5.5.2** A Foreign Service Information Technology Professional (FSITP) is being added to the Mission in the summer of 2006 and the position will also be responsible for Dhaka. The proposed FSITP *** of the current LEITP. At the time of the Audit, the LEITP indicated that she would be searching for another position given that she could not ***.
- 5.5.3** As noted elsewhere, the Mission is taking lessons learned from the tsunami experience to adapt its procedures to be better prepared in crisis situations. The Mission is examining setting up a second reception capability in the Chancery and has been establishing an office in the Official Residence.
- 5.5.4** Prior to the departure of the second LEITP, communications within the team were strained. There appears to have been confusion regarding roles and responsibilities. Weekly meetings between the DMCO and the IT team should be re-instituted, particularly when the new LEITP is hired, to ensure that all staff are kept up-to-date.

Recommendation for the Mission

- 5.5.5 The Mission should establish regular staff meetings for the IT Section.**

Mission Action and Timeframe

- 5.5.5 Bi-weekly meetings are now held.**

5.5.6 While the Mission has a good committee structure, there is no IT Committee. Staff indicated that since there is confusion regarding roles and responsibilities and there is no individual(s) responsible for the Mission's website, information would become out-of-date. An IT Committee could provide the coordination and oversight for the website and other technological decisions the Mission needs to make.

Recommendation for the Mission

- 5.5.7 The Mission should consider establishing a Information Technology Committee.**

Mission Action and Timeframe

- 5.5.7 Mission committees are established in the Fall. At that time, the new FSITP position will be staffed and an IT committee formed.**

5.5.8 The following procedural recommendations are noted for action:

Recommendations for the Mission

- 5.5.9 While inventories for IT assets exist, not all staff have signed the forms for items in their possession. The Mission should ensure that the inventories are complete.**
- 5.5.10 IT training requirements should be included in the overall Mission training plan (see recommendation 1.1.7). This would allow for training such as operating the Mission's satellite phones to be considered and tracked.**
- 5.5.11 Though the equipment located at the OR is tested monthly, the Mission should ensure that the satellite phone located in the Chancery is also tested monthly.**

5.5.12 Backup tapes should be stored in a secure location outside the server room.

5.5.13 *.**

Mission Actions and Timeframes

5.5.9 Inventories are now up-to-date.

5.5.10 Noted. IT Training will form part of the Mission's overall training plan.

5.5.11 Noted. Phones tested September 14, 2006 and again September 21, 2006 to the Watch Office and will be tested monthly hereafter.

5.5.12 The tapes are now being stored in a secure location, * room.**

5.5.13 *.**