



# **AUDIT OF THE CANADIAN HIGH COMMISSION ACCRA**

**May 2006**

**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), International Business Development (IBD), Consular and Administration Programs was conducted in Accra during the period April 18 to 22, 2005. The previous audit of these Programs took place in February 1999. The Mission is also accredited to Togo.

Accra is a Mission that is steadily growing and may see further expansion, particularly in the Immigration Program. The Mission is assuming more of a regional role with violence growing in neighbouring countries. In November 2004, the Mission established a forward staging base to assist the Canadian military with the evacuation of Canadians from Côte d'Ivoire during the crisis.

Most of the management team, including the Head of Mission (HOM), are new to the Mission as of the summer of 2004. The team has made a favourable impression on the Mission. Led by the HOM, a new approach to planning was introduced and included all staff. This contributed largely to building team spirit and improving synergies and communications among programs.

The Mission has been a pilot for the Department's new Performance Management Program (PMP) and its full implementation is planned for May 2005. As part of PMP, accountability accords are required. There are currently no accountability accords with officers except for one Program Manager at the EX level. The Mission expressed concerns regarding its ability to offer fair and competitive compensation to Locally Engaged Staff (LES), and as a result is having difficulty attracting qualified candidates.

The GR Program is managed by a dynamic FSDP, in an FS-02 position, on her first posting. Notwithstanding her fine performance, posting an FSDP in a Program Manager position is not advisable. The pace of the Program has been hectic and this officer is working extremely long hours, which is not sustainable, \*\*\*. During the week of the audit, the GR Program Manager was spending most of her time on Togo (where the death of Africa's longest serving dictator had resulted in turbulence and new elections in that country); this country normally only takes about 10% of her time.

The IBD Program's efforts are concentrated largely on the agri-food sector and International Financial Institution (IFI) funded projects. Accountability Agreements and work plans are required for all staff.

The Consular Program is well managed under the close direction of the Management Consular Officer (MCO) and day-to-day operations of an LE Consular Officer. New procedures and controls have been introduced to ensure greater effectiveness, and this report contains recommendations to further improve the Program. Consular service standards are being respected while ensuring the security

and integrity of passport and citizenship processes. To better assess quality of service, the client survey should be expanded to increase the number of people surveyed.

The new MCO has also brought a refreshing management approach to the Administration Program, which is appreciated by LES. The CR Office Manager position should be converted to Deputy MCO status but this should wait until the new Office Manager, due to arrive the summer of 2005, completes his posting. While staff are generally pleased with the services, concerns were raised with respect to response time, communications and follow-up in the Property and Finance sections. Issues are being addressed by the introduction of procedures to expedite processing times and the development of section specific service standards. There are offshore lease payments for Staff Quarters (SQs), which may contravene local currency laws, that the Mission must address.

It was observed that the Property Section would benefit from the introduction of a work order system. The Mission is currently evaluating one in use in Cairo, but the Audit Team feels that it is imperative that the Department have a coherent approach world-wide. SRD is aware of this need and is working towards a solution, but to-date, a standardized system has not been implemented at missions.

The Mission's only Crown-owned SQ, Maple House, is situated on 1.5 acres and requires a major refurbishment, estimated at US \$138,000. Discussions have occurred regarding its future, including a plan to demolish the SQ and construct four to six SQs in its place. Given the constraints of the local housing market, serious consideration should be given to this proposal before any refurbishment takes place.

Work has been completed on the Immigration Annex expansion and Administration/Consular refit providing staff with much needed office space. Plans are underway to add offices for the CIDA section and to reconfigure other areas such as the secure zone.

A total of 36 audit recommendations are raised in the report, 35; are addressed to the Mission and one is addressed to HQ. Management has responded to each recommendation indicating action already taken or decisions made, as well as future action. Of the 36 recommendations, management has stated that 30 recommendations have been implemented. For each of the remaining six 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), International Business Development (IBD), Consular and Administration Programs. An Appendix to this report lists, by Program, the specific areas that were examined during the audit.

The audit objectives were to:

- assess management controls and systems, procedures and activities that comprise 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.

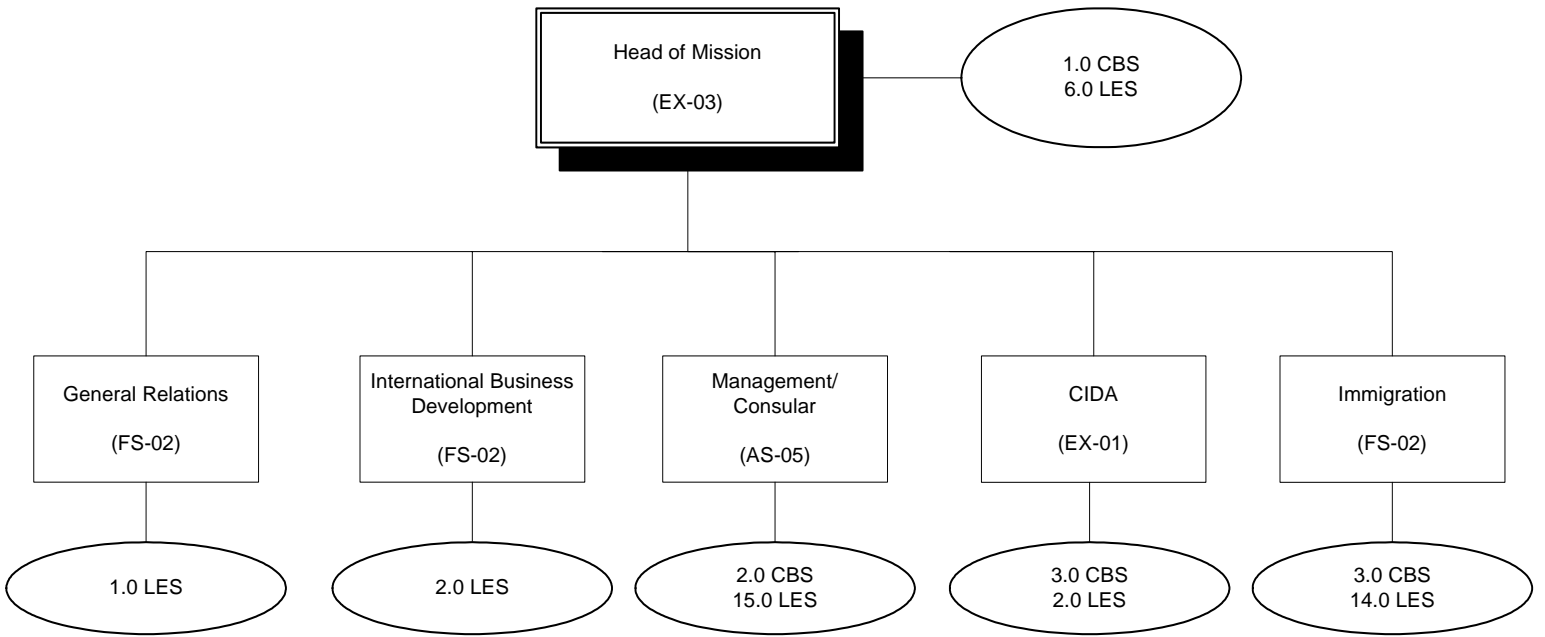
## Physical Resources

<b>Assets</b>	<b>Crown Owned</b>	<b>Crown Leased</b>
Chancery	1	0
Official Residence	1	0
Staff Quarters	1	11
Vehicles	7	0

## Financial Information 2004/05

Operating Budget	\$2,183,916
Capital Budget	394,375
CBS Overtime Budget	14,000
LES Salaries Budget	442,138
CBS Salaries	478,518
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,512,947</b>

# Organization Chart



## **MISSION MANAGEMENT**

### **1.1 Overview**

1.1.1 The HOM arrived in summer 2004 and has made a favourable impression by building team spirit and garnering the respect of all staff. His arrival coincided with an almost complete change in the management team in Accra, as four of five Program Managers arrived at the same time. Planning and communications have taken on a new and improved approach with this new team. A Mission-wide retreat was held shortly after the team's arrival and each Program, including the OGDs (Other Government Departments), established work objectives and priorities that fed into the Mission "MAP" (Messages, Advocacy and Priorities), a planning document that allows all staff to be aware of each other's objectives. At year-end, performance assessments are made against these objectives and priorities.

1.1.2 The Mission has been a pilot for the Department's new Performance Management Program (PMP) and its full implementation will be taking place in May 2005. As part of the PMP, accountability accords will be established to identify, in measurable terms, what is expected of individuals and serve as the basis to assess performance.

1.1.3 The Mission has a sound committee structure in place. The Committee on Mission Management (CMM) meets weekly and minutes are taken. Other committees include Classification, Occupational Health and Safety, Contract Review Board, Housing, Official Languages and LES. The LES Committee meets with the HOM and MCO as required. Staff meetings are also held by the HOM every two to three months and the HOM has regular weekly meetings with the MCO and almost daily meetings with the IBD and GR Program Managers (PMs). Less frequent but regular meetings are also held with the CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency) and CIC (Citizenship and Immigration Canada) PMs.

1.1.4 Learning and training is a Mission priority. A learning coordinator has been appointed and there is a Learning Working Group that has been established. This Working Group will be developing a learning plan for the Mission. A Learning Strategy is already in place and objectives have been established for the next twelve months.

1.1.5 Access to recreational facilities at the Mission is currently reserved for the CBS; however, LES have access to the Club for lunch. \*\*\*

1.1.6 The Mission and the Area Management Office for Africa and the Middle East (GAM) have held discussions regarding the conversion of the Office Manager position from the current CR-04 level to a Deputy Management Consular Officer (DMCO) position. Given the challenging environment, the growth of the Mission and its expanding role as a regional centre, the current position is unable to provide the full



range of support the Mission requires. The Audit Team supports the conversion of the position to DMCO status, but only upon termination of the posting of the new Office Manager due to arrive in the summer of 2005.

## **GENERAL RELATIONS PROGRAM**

### **2.1 Overview**

2.1.1 The GR Program Manager (PM) in Accra has been at the Mission for eight months and is an FSDP in an FS-02 position. She is serving on her first posting after two years in the African Geographic Bureau (GAF), where she became familiar with West African issues. There is also an LE-06 Assistant in the Program who divides his time between the GR and IBD Programs in the ratio of 80:20. Recently, his time is devoted totally to the GR Program \*\*\*. The HOM works closely with the PM and is an active participant in the Program. The HOM also provides political reporting on selected topics. The GR Program covers the countries of Ghana and Togo. In 2004-05, the Program spent \$10,026 on travel, \$3,319 on hospitality and spent the \$10,000 in its Post Initiative Fund (PIF).

2.1.2 The PM is effectively managing the Program. Normally 90 percent of her time would be concentrated on Ghana, but the February death (2005) of Togo's President, Africa's longest serving dictator (38 years), has required extensive reporting and during the audit visit, she was spending 60 to 70 percent of her time covering political affairs within that country. An election was held April 24 and the PM closely observed and reported on the event. She has developed a good network of contacts in Togo in the political, media and human rights sectors, and has developed close relationships with like-minded missions. The HOM and the Geographic Bureau are very pleased with her reporting, which is seen as crisp and analytical. The Geographic Bureau, however, commented that the reporting from the Mission could be better balanced (at times too positive).

2.1.3 There is no reporting contract between GAF and the Mission. The Branch recently (April 5, 2005) sent a set of generic reporting guidelines to all missions within the GAF region. It identified the elements of good political-economic reporting, the format and frequency expected and the rules to follow respecting distribution. There is a requirement, however, for Mission specific instructions in the form of a reporting contract with each officer which can then be used to assess the individual's performance and establish accountability.

2.1.4 Much has been accomplished in the PM's short period at the Mission. The PM is dynamic and is proactive. When she arrived at the Mission, the HOM established the sectoral priorities and objectives and identified work themes. At year-end, there was an evaluation of the Program which illustrated the Program's achievements including the extensive reporting on both Togo and Ghana; its involvement in organizing Canadian observers for Ghana's parliamentary elections; its development of a Mission media map to outline the media in Ghana; its updating of media files and broadcast lists so that press releases could be sent electronically to reporters; and the numerous events it hosted to create and cultivate linkages with various aspects of Ghanaian society. The evaluation also showed that the Program had

used its PIF funding effectively to host three highly successful events for la Quinzaine de la Francophonie and participated in numerous interactive Commonwealth Week events. To further ensure both the HOM and Program Manager are clear on the requirements expected of the Program, an Accountability Agreement needs to be signed between the HOM and the PM.

2.1.5 The PM works long hours and with the events taking place in Togo, the overtime has been increasing. \*\*\* Mission management needs to take firm action to redress this issue.

### **Recommendations for the Mission**

2.1.6 **An Accountability Agreement should be developed between the HOM and the GR Program Manager which spells out clearly, in measurable terms, the expectations and goals of the Program.**

2.1.7 **The Mission must take action to address the \*\*\* situation and to provide the requisite administrative support for the General Relations Program Manager.**

### **Mission Actions and Time Frames**

2.1.6 **The accountability agreement was developed in September 2005.**

2.1.7 **\*\*\* A new GR assistant was hired in November 2005. Mission management is also examining other options (internships, short-term contracts) to beef up the administrative and other support for the GR program.**

### **Recommendation for GAF**

2.1.8 **A reporting contract should be established with the GR Program in Accra to identify GAF's expectations from the Mission in terms of its political and economic reporting.**

### **GAF Action and Time Frame**

2.1.8 **The issue of reporting contracts between geographic divisions and GR programs is being addressed as part of the Strategic Planning process currently taking place at the Departmental level. According to this exercise, Country Strategies presented by the Missions will be followed, once strategic objectives have received HQ approval, by a reporting agreement between geographic divisions and Missions based on their respective strategies. Approval by HQ of strategic**

**objectives should take place at the end of March 2006. The request for reaching these reporting agreements is expected to be sent early April 2006, and the agreements should be finished within one month.**

## **INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

### **3.1 Overview**

3.1.1 The Mission's IBD Program consists of an FS-02 Program Manager (PM), an LE-09 Trade Commissioner (TC) and an LE-05 Trade Assistant. The Program Manager is in his fourth year and will be departing in summer 2005. The HOM actively participates in the Program. The TC is new to the Program, having joined the Mission a short time ago, and is still on probation. The Assistant position, until recently, was divided between the GR Program and IBD with IBD receiving 0.20 of this FTE. A business case was successfully made to make the Assistant position full-time and a new employee was to start a one-year term position in May 2005. Both the TC and Assistant are scheduled for training on TCS's New Approach @ Work. Client Service Funding in 2004-05 was \$2,450, travel \$2,300 and hospitality \$4,000. The PM has a good knowledge of the region and has developed a good network of contacts but doing business in this environment is difficult and challenging.

3.1.2 Ghana's economy, by African standards, is improving and is largely the result of sound domestic policies and strong international support. GDP growth of 5.8 percent in 2004 exceeded expectations and, until just recently, the rate of inflation was decreasing. Ghana is the main focus of the Program's efforts. While Togo is also a country of accreditation, there is little trade activity as conditions there continue to deteriorate and IFI (International Financial Institution) funding has been withdrawn. The Program's concentration in Ghana is spent largely on Agri-Food and IFI-funded projects. Mining equipment and services also receive attention with some 40 firms wholly or jointly owned by Canadian companies. Other sectors of interest include transportation, information and communication technology (ICT), and building materials and construction.

3.1.3 In 2003, Canada exported \$60 million in goods, including wheat, which totalled about \$25 million. Ghana imports nearly US \$400 million of food, over \$100 million of which represents prepared food products. Agriculture Canada sent a team to Ghana in 2004 to assess opportunities. The PM called on all major food importers to showcase Canadian products and, while there have been few results to date, some interest has been shown. Information of IFI-funded projects is closely followed and government ministries are visited and newspapers monitored to review developments on these projects. These represent opportunities for Canadian technical and engineering services. Canadian investment in Ghana is primarily in gold and bauxite mining. Since 1989, Canadian companies have invested \$190 million in Ghana.

3.1.4 The Program receives about 25 enquiries each week, including those from local firms. Time is also spent on troubleshooting and advocacy on the part of Canadian companies. Scams and unsolicited messages are dealt with on a weekly basis. In 2004, the correspondence log shows some 490 messages sent. WIN showed over 100 contacts tracked in the past year. There are approximately 1,000 contacts in

Outlook. There is a Ghana-Canada Business Association with membership set at 140 people for which the PM organizes a monthly function. The PM also hosted the West Africa Trade Officers' meeting this past year and took the Mission lead in setting up a staging base in Accra to assist the Canadian military with the evacuation of Canadians from Côte d'Ivoire.

3.1.5 IBD planning took on a new approach with the arrival of the new HOM. A retreat was held for the entire High Commission and it was the key launch of a participatory approach to Mission planning. The Program identified its work objectives and priorities for the year, explained how the Program functioned and allowed the LES to participate in the process. Based on the input from each Program, a summary Mission planning tool was developed - the MAP (Messages, Advocacy and Priorities). The IBD component of this document spells out the business environment, opportunities and rationalizes sector priorities. This document should now be used as the basis for a work plan for the TC who does not have an Accountability Agreement with the PM. This is needed to clearly set out the expectations of the TC in terms that are measurable and for which there are specific targets (e.g. outcalls). This could serve as the basis to evaluate the annual performance of this Officer. There is also a need to have a similar document between the HOM and the PM. Without such a document, it is difficult to assess the overall effectiveness of the Program and the performance of the Officers.

3.1.6 The Mission developed a business case in 2004 for GGTT (Sub-Saharan Africa Trade Section) to defend the continuance of having a Canada-based PM at the Mission. It claims that pursuing promising agri-food and capital project sectors, along with those of the second-tier priorities, would fall to the new LE TC who could not reasonably be expected to make the same headway. Support on trade policy and market access matters would also be limited and the Mission maintains that removing the CB position would be counter-productive in a country where Canada has declared that trade and investment are critical to Africa's advancement. The HOM believes a CB position is needed to bring full value to the Program. Any evaluation of the requirement for a Canada-based Trade Commissioner needs to be done in the context of a regional approach to promoting trade development in West Africa.

## **Recommendations for the Mission**

**3.1.7 Accountability Agreements should be developed for the Trade Program Manager and the LE Trade Commissioner expressing each officer's objectives and goals in terms that are measurable to serve as the basis for evaluating the effectiveness of the Program and the performance of each Officer.**

**3.1.8 A work plan should be developed for the LE Trade Commissioner which identifies activities, expected results and the time frame for deliverables.**

## **Mission Actions and Time Frames**

**3.1.7            Accountability agreements were developed by September 2005.**

**3.1.8            Work plan based on sectoral priorities was developed by September 2005.**

## CONSULAR PROGRAM

### 4.1 Overview

4.1.1 The Consular Program is well managed under the direction of the AS-05 MCO. The MCO, upon her arrival in the summer of 2004, assumed control of the Consular Program which had previously been delegated to the Office Manager. A number of process controls and templates have been instituted which have contributed to the organization, consistency and effectiveness of the Program. The Mission has an Honorary Consul in Lomé, Togo and has 14 wardens in Ghana, seven of whom are located in Accra. Consular Contingency Plans for Ghana and Togo are up to date.

4.1.2 The Audit Team was accompanied by a Security Officer from Passport Canada (PPTC) who participated in the review of Consular services. Following the fieldwork, the Security Officer provided a list of detailed recommendations to the Mission. These recommendations are included in the audit report, where deemed appropriate.

4.1.3 In 2004, the Mission issued 227 passports and handled approximately 30 citizenship applications per year. Passports issued in the last four years have steadily decreased and the Mission is unable to identify the cause. The Registrar of Canadians Abroad (ROCA) system indicates there are 465 registered Canadians in Ghana, though the Mission estimates the actual number to be three times that amount. In Togo there are 23 Canadians who are registered. Due to the high rate of identity fraud in West Africa, the Mission has instituted the use of DNA testing for all citizenship requests and for certain passport requests with positive results. The Mission has received positive feedback concerning the level of service it provides through client surveys, however, the response rate is low and the Mission needs to explore methods of increasing customer feedback.

4.1.4 The LE-07 Consular Officer is a locally engaged Canadian who is well trained. While respecting the departmental service standards, the Consular Officer also places emphasis on the security and integrity of passport and citizenship processes, of particular importance in a region known to have a high incidence of identity manipulation. \*\*\* the Consular Officer takes leave for one month during the summer \*\*\*. In 2004, the void was filled by hiring and training a local Canadian. The individual is not available for summer 2005 and the Mission will have to find a replacement. The Mission may consider the possibility of a yearly Temporary Duty (TD) opportunity and, if so, should discuss this with HMA (the Assignment and Pool Management Division).

4.1.5 The current Administration/Consular Assistant is an LE-04 responsible for a number of duties including receiving Consular inquiries and scheduling of drivers. She has yet to receive the required training to fill in for the Consular Officer during long absences. Job-shadowing had been done in the past, but was stopped during the



vacancy in the HR Assistant position. The Mission needs to \*\*\* ensure that the appropriate training is completed.

4.1.6 Monthly reconciliation of passport inventory is completed by the MCO. The HOM participates in the quarterly reconciliation. The Mission needs to ensure that two CBS participate in the monthly passport inventory reconciliation to ensure that proper checks and balances are maintained.

4.1.7 Some signage is not displayed in both Official Languages in the Consular waiting area. Service standards are difficult to locate on the Mission's website and on citizenship and passport application cover letters. The Mission needs to ensure that all Consular information is provided in both English and French.

4.1.8 The Honorary Consul (HC) in Lomé will be giving up this position shortly and the Mission had not yet started the process of finding a replacement. Under the current arrangement, the HC is responsible directly to PPTC; passport returns are not forwarded to Accra for review prior to being submitted to HQ.

#### **Recommendations for the Mission**

**4.1.9 The Mission should expand its survey of respondents to allow for a more appropriate assessment of the quality of Consular services delivered by the Program.**

**4.1.10 The Mission should develop a strategy for replacing the Consular Officer during both short and long-term absences.**

**4.1.11 Two CBS should participate in the monthly reconciliation of the passport inventory.**

**4.1.12 Signage in both Official Languages should be displayed in the Consular waiting area.**

**4.1.13 All passport applications, spoils and reconciled inventory forms handled by the Honorary Consul should be forwarded to Accra for review prior to being forwarded to HQ. In cases where no services have been rendered, the Mission should receive a "nil" inventory report.**

#### **Mission Actions and Time Frames**

**4.1.9 The Mission considers this to be an excellent idea and as of August 19, 2005 is providing each client coming to the reception window with a client feedback sheet.**

- 4.1.10** Short-term absences of the Consular Officer for up to two weeks are covered by a combination of efforts of the MCO, Office Manager, and Consular Assistant. Given the workload at the Mission, longer absences must be filled by an expatriate at the officer level. For the past two years, the Mission has been successful in finding excellent substitutes. The Mission approached HMA and CNO with the possibility of a yearly TD opportunity and will follow up.
- 4.1.11** Two CBS will participate in the monthly inventory from August 2005 onwards. The Mission suggests that the Passport Office update their form to acknowledge the new requirement.
- 4.1.12** Signage in both official languages is now displayed in the Consular/Management Services waiting area.
- 4.1.13** The Mission will take the lead responsibility for all passports in the countries of its responsibility. When the new Honorary Consul is appointed, he/she will be coached regarding procedures for the Emergency Passports held at the Consulate. All passport applications, spoils and reconciled inventory forms handled by the Honorary Consul will be forwarded to the Mission for review prior to being forwarded to HQ. In cases where no services have been rendered, the Mission expects a “nil” inventory report.
- 4.1.14** The following procedural recommendations are noted for action.

#### **Recommendations for the Mission**

- 4.1.15** Passport label printers should be stored in the DASCO cabinet as a security measure.
- 4.1.16** An automatic locking mechanism (e.g. Uican) should be installed on the Consular Officer’s door.
- 4.1.17** The Mission, when processing passport applications, should be comparing the completed passports to proof of citizenship and the passport application to ensure data and photo consistency.

#### **Mission Actions and Time Frames**

- 4.1.15** Passport label printers are now stored in a DASCO cabinet.

- 4.1.16**      **The Consular Officer's door is always locked when she is not in the office. The Mission will look into installing an automatic locking mechanism.**
  
- 4.1.17**      **Completed passports have been compared to proof of citizenship and the passport application to ensure data and photo consistency since February 2005.**

## **ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM**

### **5.1 Management of the Program**

5.1.1 The Administration Program is headed by an AS-05 Management Consular Officer (MCO) who is currently in the first year of her second posting. This is her first assignment as a Program Manager and her efforts have been focussed on the Consular Program, the Annex project and the Abidjan evacuation. She is assisted by a CR-04 Office Manager.

5.1.2 The Mission has a good understanding of projects that need to be completed and has developed work plans to address priorities such as the development of service standards and a re-structuring of the work order system. It would be useful to formalize this in an accountability accord between the MCO and the HOM, and use it in identifying the objectives and expectations for the new Office Manager arriving in summer 2005.

5.1.3 Staff interviews indicated that the MCO's open communications style and approachability is appreciated. Managers and staff across the Mission are generally satisfied with services, though there are some concerns with the lack of communications and timeliness of the Property and Finance sections.

### **5.2 Human Resources (HR)**

5.2.1 The Section is managed by the MCO with the assistance of an LE-05 Administration/Personnel Assistant. At the time of the audit, the LE-05 Assistant had been with the Mission for two weeks. The Mission has established the following HR Committees: Classification, Occupational Health and Safety, Official Languages and a Learning Working Group. There is also a Locally-engaged Staff (LES) Committee. The Mission has a mini-clinic with a contract nurse who assists the Section with reviews of LES medical claims.

5.2.2 The Mission expressed concerns regarding its ability to offer fair and competitive compensation to LES, and as a result is having difficulty attracting qualified candidates. The Mission has stopped publishing salaries in newspaper ads in an effort to attract candidates and when salaries are discussed candidates have been refusing to accept step 1 of the salary band. As a consequence, employees are starting at salaries close to the midpoint of the salary band and this is causing concern amongst LES who had earlier accepted starting salaries at step 1. The Mission will need to closely monitor the salary levels within the country and keep HLD (Locally Engaged Staff Services Bureau) informed of any continued staffing difficulties. The Mission has not been noting the justification for hiring above step 1 in the HR files.

5.2.3 The Mission participated in the pilot training for the PMP project (Performance Management Program) and plans to launch the process in May 2005.

Prior to transferring to this new system, the Mission needs to ensure all appraisals for staff are completed.

5.2.4 A benefits review was conducted by HLD and the LES Handbook was approved in October 2004. There are currently two items being re-examined: the pension scheme provided under the local social security system and the medical coverage for LES Expat positions. The Mission is to provide further information to HLD on the medical coverage. There are currently four LES Expat positions, one in the Consular Section and three in the Citizenship and Immigration Canada Section.

5.2.5 With the arrival of the HOM and the MCO, the Mission has been promoting a culture of learning and has developed a Learning Strategy. The Training Co-ordinator, with the assistance of the Learning Working Group, will be developing a Mission-wide training plan.

5.2.6 The Mission's LES Committee met with the Audit Team and raised the following concerns: the belief that salaries are lagging behind, that there are no allowances such as housing and loans to staff and that the medical plan does not cover over-the-counter medications such as aspirin, even if included in a doctor's prescription. Staff are pleased that the pension plan will be reviewed by HLD. Mission management and the HOM meet regularly with the Committee and with all staff keeping them apprised of what is happening in the Mission and listening to their concerns in an effort to improve their working conditions.

5.2.7 The current Community Co-ordinator (a non-Canadian spouse) was departing and a competition was under way to replace her, for which two spouses have applied. The Community Co-ordinator did indicate that not having a budget supplied to organize events was the one difficulty of the position.

5.2.8 The LE-05 Personnel Assistant position has experienced turnover in the last year, which has had an impact on the completeness of files. Some job descriptions are missing, competition files require organizing and reliability checks need to be updated. These tasks are priorities for the current Assistant to complete. The Mission indicated it plans to review the job descriptions of all staff in the Mission. File review indicated that the MCO has been signing Letters of Offer rather than the HOM.

### **Recommendations for the Mission**

**5.2.9 Letters of offer to new employees should be signed by the HOM rather than the MCO.**

**5.2.10 The justification for hiring new employees above step 1 of the salary band should be documented on file. Salary levels in the market**

should be closely monitored and HLD informed of changes in the workplace.

- 5.2.11 All outstanding appraisals should be completed.
- 5.2.12 Job descriptions for all staff should be updated to ensure coincidence between the actual duties being carried out and the position descriptions.
- 5.2.13 Competition files should be properly organized to show the steps used in the hiring process including the criteria used to interview candidates, the questions posed to candidates and their responses, an evaluation and scoring of each candidate and the justification for final selection.
- 5.2.14 Personnel files should be reviewed to ensure all Reliability Checks are complete and up to date.

#### **Mission Actions and Time Frames**

- 5.2.9 Since June 2005, the HOM has signed all letters of offer to new employees.
- 5.2.10 Documentation for employees hired since January 2005 who were offered higher than step one is now on file. This is now standard procedure. Salary levels are closely monitored and HLD will be informed of trends.
- 5.2.11 All appraisals with the exception of two are completed. Those two will be completed by June 1, 2006.
- 5.2.12 All the job descriptions are updated with the exception of two that remain partially completed. Those will be done by May 1, 2006.
- 5.2.13 Competitions held at the Mission follow strict procedure. Competitions held since August 2004 are all documented and filed in the Management Services Section.
- 5.2.14 Reliability checks are up to date. The Mission is in the process of reviewing those due in May 2006.

### 5.3 Physical Resources

5.3.1 The Section is overseen by the CR-04 Office Manager with day-to-day operations carried out by the LE-07 Property Manager with assistance from an LE-04 Maintenance/Inventory Clerk. The Section also contains a GS-03 Cleaner and Gardener. The Gardener position is currently vacant and the Mission is evaluating the possibility of staffing the position or converting it to a Driver position to service the increasing demands of an expanding CIDA Program. There are also three gardeners and two cleaners on contract. The Section has weekly meetings chaired by the MCO. The Mission appointed an Environmental Co-ordinator in February 2005 and has established a Contract Review Board, a Housing Committee and an Occupational Health and Safety Committee.

5.3.2 While staff generally are satisfied with the services provided by the Section, some concerns were raised by occupants of the staff quarters (SQs) regarding response time, communications and follow-up. Work requests for maintenance are submitted to the Property Manager through e-mail which are then forwarded to the Office Manager for approval. The e-mails are saved and work orders are entered into a ledger book. However, information regarding the status of requests is not readily available and there is not always an indication that the work was completed satisfactorily. The Mission is evaluating the Outlook work order system used in Cairo which, if implemented, would allow the Section to better manage its work orders, keep clients aware of steps taken, as well as provide the Office Manager with the ability to review the status of requests and to document confirmation from the clients. The Mission is also in the process of developing service standards for the Section.

5.3.3 Concerns over the length of time required to process contractor's invoices were raised. The Mission has instituted controls to address the issue. Invoices are now date stamped prior to being submitted to the Property Section for approval and stamped when they are sent to Finance for payment. The MCO will now be able to establish where the bottleneck is occurring and take corrective action.

5.3.4 The Immigration Annex expansion and Administration/Consular Annex refit project have been successfully completed and staff are now provided with office space that is functional and modern. The Mission will now be tackling the CIDA expansion to accommodate the Program's three new positions. Other projects planned by the Mission and SRSF (the Property Maintenance and Operations Section) include the re-configuration of the guard house and secure zone, renovation of the recreational facility and annex washrooms, construction of a mezzanine storage area and installation of a CCTV system.

5.3.5 There are currently 11 Crown-leased properties. The properties are well maintained, annual inspections are completed and regular preventive maintenance on air conditioners and generators is conducted. The Mission needs to ensure that smoke detectors are checked as well. While some individuals are over-housed, the difficult

rental environment, where a year's rent in advance is the norm, does not provide the Mission with much flexibility to realign its SQ portfolio. In addition, recent instability in neighbouring countries has caused an influx of people into Accra as foreign governments, much like our own, move resources. This has placed increased pressure on the rental market and decreased the supply of acceptable properties. Given these environmental restrictions, the Mission needs to ensure that, for those occasions when an occupant is assigned an SQ that is larger than the guidelines, the justification is properly documented and maintained on file.

#### 5.3.6 \*\*\*

5.3.7 The Mission's only Crown-owned SQ, Maple House, is situated on 1.5 acres of land and was purchased in 1962 as the OR. It is currently occupied by the Trade Program Manager and requires a major refurbishment, estimated at US \$138,000. Discussions have been held regarding its future, including a plan to demolish the SQ and construct four to six SQs in its place. Serious consideration should be given to what is planned for this property before any major refurbishment takes place. There appears to be merit for using the land for multiple SQs, given the current local housing market.

5.3.8 Property files are up to date with the exception of the Chancery, OR and storage inventories which are not yet complete. This is of particular importance as the Mission believes that a refrigerator has gone missing, but is unable to confirm this. The Mission is in the process of installing new furniture in the Chancery and should take advantage of this process to create a new inventory. The Fine Arts inventory was verified by the Mission, but the official art has since been redistributed with the opening of the Immigration Annex and renovation of the Administration/Consular Annex. The Mission needs to submit an updated inventory to SRM (Materiel Services Division) to ensure adequate tracking, providing the new location and seeking guidance regarding the pieces that the Mission would like to store.

5.3.9 A Consular booth was recently installed in the Consular waiting room. The booth is not soundproof and provides little privacy for clients as discussions can easily be heard by others in the area. The Mission needs to explore options for soundproofing the booth. The airlock door in the Consular waiting area catches on the floor when fully opened and will remain open unless dislodged. The Mission needs to resolve the issue and ensure the integrity of the airlock.

5.3.10 The adjustment to the fire alarm system was scheduled for the week following the audit visit, after which a fire drill was planned for the Mission. The Mission's Fire Committee needs to ensure that the drill is completed as staff will need to familiarize themselves with the emergency exits of the changed layout.

5.3.11 As a result of a large theft of fuel, controls over the fuelling of vehicles and the ordering of fuel have been tightened. A log is kept for each vehicle when it is fuelled



and two signatures are required. The Office Manager now checks and records fuel levels and oversees the ordering process. To further improve controls, the Mission needs to complete the monthly vehicle usage and expense form. The Mission is still dealing with local authorities on the theft.

5.3.12 A schedule for drivers needs to be developed as currently email requests for service are distributed to the drivers who organize themselves. It makes it difficult for the Section to make changes or know the drivers' whereabouts, when there is no overview of the day/week to examine.

5.3.13 The Fixed Asset Module within IMS needs to be updated so that assets over \$10,000 are recorded as required by the Department's policy on Accounting for Capital Assets.

### **Recommendations for the Mission**

- 5.3.14 Property files should contain the justification in cases where individuals are over-housed.**
- 5.3.15 The Mission, in consultation with SRD, should decide the future of the Maple House property prior to committing to any future renovation.**
- 5.3.16 Distribution accounts should be completed for the Chancery, OR and items in storage.**
- 5.3.17 An updated fine arts inventory should be submitted to SRM.**
- 5.3.18 Options to address the issue of soundproofing the Consular booth should be explored.**
- 5.3.19 Establish a process for the scheduling of drivers.**
- 5.3.20 Ensure that the Fixed Asset Module of IMS is updated to reflect all assets in excess of \$10,000.**
- 5.3.21 Complete the monthly vehicle usage and expense form.**

### **Mission Actions and Time Frames**

- 5.3.14 Justification has been placed on leasing files.**
- 5.3.15 The Mission has had to perform major renovations (electrical works, prevention of roof leakages at the expansion joint, laundry**

refurbishment, and retrofit of two bathrooms) on Maple House in order to make the SQ safe and tenantable over the next five years. The Mission is currently waiting for SRD direction regarding the future of Maple House.

- 5.3.16** The Mission is developing a state-of-the art inventory process, using a customized database, barcodes, and scanners. A full inventory will be completed by December 31, 2005.
- 5.3.17** The fine arts inventory was submitted to SRM in October 2005.
- 5.3.18** The Mission has installed a sound system in the reception area to mask conversations held in the consular area. This has had some success. The Mission also constructed a sound proof cubicle outside the consular window.
- 5.3.19** A Driver scheduling system was put in place by the new Office Manager in August 2005.
- 5.3.20** The Fixed Asset Module in IMS is being updated.
- 5.3.21** An appropriate system was put in place in August 2005.

#### **5.4 Finance**

5.4.1 The Finance Section is headed by an LE-07 Senior Accountant who reports to the MCO and is assisted by an LE-05 Accounts/Administration Clerk. The Mission operates two bank accounts - a US dollar account and a local CEDI account. The Mission's operating budget is considered adequate. Approximately 100 cheques are issued each month. Immigration revenues average around \$800,000 per year with Consular revenues approaching \$75,000 annually. The roles and responsibilities of both Accountants are well-defined, they backup one another and both have received appropriate departmental IMS training. Plans are underway to provide both accountants with training on the IMS Materiel Management Module (MM). Contracts over \$5,000 are currently not entered in the MM as required. Owing to time constraints, there was no detailed review of the Mission accounts. The audit focussed on selected processes and controls deemed of higher risk.

5.4.2 The MCO signs Section 33 FAA and reviews month-end accounts but does not use IMS. She plans on taking an IMS self-training refresher course in the next few months. It is important this plan be pursued. The bank provides on-site service each Wednesday, accepting the Mission's deposits and providing personal banking service to staff. Timeliness of payments by the Finance Section is seen as an issue at this Mission. Rather than the fault of the Accountants, however, the problem may

reside outside the Finance Section. The MCO is taking steps to address this issue. Administrative service standards are also in the process of being developed. Controls over the receipt of Immigration and Consular revenues are appropriate. Official receipts are provided by the Finance Section and monies are held securely until the bank sets up at the Mission.

5.4.3 New payment procedures and controls have been introduced to identify where the bottlenecks are occurring in the process. The new procedures call for all invoices to flow through the Administrative/Consular Assistant who date stamps them before forwarding them to the respective area for processing. One contractor was quite vocal with the Audit Team concerning the delays in receiving payment. For those individuals approving invoices and signing Section 34, it must be impressed upon them the importance of processing invoices in a timely manner.

5.4.4 The MCO is considering introducing quiet hours for the Finance Section, thereby restricting service to clients. Regularizing the processing of payments to twice weekly instead of ad hoc throughout the day, as is currently the practice, would also allow for workflow in Finance to be better organized and allow officers signing documents to better plan their time. The Accountants indicated they would welcome this change.

5.4.5 Bank reconciliations are up to date but reconciliation packages are not forwarded to SMFF within the required time frame of ten working days of month end. The bank is slow in providing the monthly statements and the processed cheques. This affects the ability to quickly conduct reconciliation activities. The Mission is currently looking at using a different bank. On-line banking is also being pursued with a "view - only" restriction to help with the reconciliation process. Notwithstanding, original bank statements and cheques are required to formally complete the reconciliation.

5.4.6 The Mission's US dollar and CEDI bank account balances are high. Requests for fund transfers from HQ are made each Friday based on a forecast of upcoming expenditures. An analysis of both bank accounts dating back to March 2004 shows the average balance at month-end in the US account at \$95,000 (CDN) and in the CEDI account at \$43,000. Seldom do balances reach much below these amounts throughout the month. Currently, the request is made by the Senior Accountant with the MCO's approval. The MCO needs to be more integrally involved in forecasting fund requirements taking into account the average amount for outstanding cheques.

5.4.7 \*\*\*

## **Recommendations for the Mission**

**5.4.8 The Finance Section should set specific hours to service clients and set aside quiet hours to process transactions.**

- 5.4.9**            **Payments should be processed twice weekly to allow the Finance Section to better organize the work flow and to allow those signing documents to better manage their time.**
- 5.4.10**          **The MCO should closely monitor the processing of payments to minimize delays.**
- 5.4.11**          **Better cash management of the Mission's two bank accounts is needed to minimize the balances in each account.**
- 5.4.12**          **\*\*\***
- 5.4.13**          **Service contracts over \$5,000 should be entered into the IMS Materiel Management Module as required.**

#### **Mission Actions and Time Frames**

- 5.4.8**            **Public hours and quiet hours for the Finance Section have been in place since May 2005.**
- 5.4.9**            **Payments will be processed twice a week: Monday and Thursday afternoons.**
- 5.4.10**          **The time to process payments is now constantly monitored by the MCO and Office Manager. The time lag has been reduced.**
- 5.4.11**          **The MCO has been integrally involved in forecasting weekly fund requirements. The Mission will review regular payments to make every effort to ensure a minimal month-end bank balance. However, there are always a number of outstanding cheques, closely followed by the Accountant, over which we have no control and which may boost our month-end balance.**
- 5.4.12**          **\*\*\***
- 5.4.13**          **Training is scheduled for over the first three months of FY 2006/07 due to workload requirements.**

#### **5.5 Information Management**

- 5.5.1**            **Day-to-day management of the Information Technology Section is carried out by a Foreign Service Information Technology Professional (FSITP) with assistance from an LE-07 Locally Engaged Information Technology Professional (LEITP). Mission**

staff indicated that they are pleased with the quality of service provided. The FSITP has regional responsibilities for our missions in Ouagadougou, Abuja and Lagos.

5.5.2 The FSITP arrived in the summer of 2004 and is on his first posting. He is working closely with the LEITP to define roles and responsibilities. The Section uses Remedy to create trouble tickets.

5.5.3 The expansion of the Chancery has provided the Mission with the opportunity to set up a training room. The Mission, as part of its training plan development, should survey staff to determine what IT training is required. It can then determine which needs can be addressed internally, via the Canadian Foreign Service Institute (CFSI) or out-sourced locally.

5.5.4 The FSITP has been working with the local telephone company to improve the Mission telephone system and staff have noticed a marked improvement. There has also been an upgrade of the satellite system which has increased bandwidth.

5.5.5 The Section currently does not have a sign-out procedure for the loan of laptops to staff. Delays in deactivating SIGNET accounts have been experienced as the Section is not always promptly informed of the departure of employees/contractors.

### **Recommendations for the Mission**

**5.5.6 Develop a loan sign-out procedure for Mission laptops.**

**5.5.7 An informatics training plan should be developed and integrated into the Mission's overall training plan.**

**5.5.8 The Mission needs to keep the IT Section informed of the arrival/departures of staff so that the Section can ensure the appropriate steps are taken in the activation/deactivation process.**

### **Mission Actions and Time Frames**

**5.5.6 A loan-sign out procedure for Mission laptops has been developed and all appropriate staff informed.**

**5.5.7 The Mission's LEITP is an excellent trainer and has recently provided sessions to staff, such as SIGNET 3 refresher, use of scanners, and introduction to new CD/DVD drives, etc. Periodically, the LEITP will send to all staff a schedule of IT courses available on-line. Individuals with training needs (self-identified or identified by Program Managers) will be encouraged to take the on-line courses and then supplementary training will be provided by the LEITP.**

#### **5.5.8**

**It is now standard procedure for the Personnel/Administrative Assistant to inform the IT Section of the arrivals/departures of staff. Deactivation of SIGNET accounts is the responsibility of the MSO (MCO in this case), not the IT Section. Requests for deletion of all departed employees/contractors are up to date. However, delays in deactivating SIGNET accounts do not affect the work performance of current staff. SIGNET Administration has informed the Mission that they are very busy and deactivation is a low priority for them.**

## APPENDIX

The following tables indicate the areas of each Program that were reviewed to determine compliance to policies and procedures and to assess efficiency and effectiveness. For each Program listed, reference can be made to the specific audit guides on the Office of the Inspector General (ZIV) intranet site containing the detailed audit criteria and audit procedures applied during the audit.

The focus and extent of on-site work is based on an assessment of materiality and related risk. This is done through communication with HQ bureaux, including briefings by line management and the functional bureaux responsible for each of the areas listed below, 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 HOM and Program Managers, a meeting with the LES 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. Accordingly, not all areas receive equal attention. More work and time are devoted to material and high risk issues, particularly those of interest to management. Occasionally, due to time limitations or other factors, it is not possible to provide audit coverage for all areas. Areas not covered are noted in the Scope and Objectives Section of the report.

**Mission Management**

Accountability Agreements	Communications
Strategic and Operational Plans	Hub and Spoke Relations
Program Integration and Coordination	Other Government Departments
Committee Structure	Performance Measurement

**General Relations Program (Political/Public and Cultural)**

Management of the Program	Media Relations
Program Planning	Cultural Affairs
Political Reporting	Performance Measurement
Economic Reporting	

**International Business Development Program**

Management of the Program	Investment
Program Planning	Science and Technology
New Approach Framework	Trade Policy and Market Access
Trade Development	Performance Measurement

**Consular Program**

Management of the Program	Citizenship Services
Service to Canadian Citizens	Honorary Consuls
Passport Processing	Admission to Canada

**Administration Program Management**

Management of the Program	Services Standards
Program Planning	Communications
Policies, Systems and Procedures	Performance Measurement



**Human Resources**

Management of the HR Function	Classification
Staffing	Pay and Benefits
Staff Relations	Training and Development
Official Languages	Health and Safety
Community Program Activities	Import of Goods

**Physical Resources**

Mission Property Management Plan	Official Vehicles
Chancery	Inventories
Official Residence	Materiel Management
Staff Quarters	Recreational Property
Maintenance	Disposals

**Finance**

Budget Process	Reconciliations
Control Framework	Banking
Expenditure Authority and Payment	Cash Accounts
Receipt and Deposit of Money	Advances
Transfers (COs, IOs and SOs)	Petty Cash
Cost Recovery	Currency Conversion
Contracting	Hospitality

**Information Technology**

Training	Capacity
Equipment Configuration	Contingency and Back-up
Systems	Web Sites
Service	PSAT