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INSPECTION OF THE CANADIAN EMBASSY
Athens

November 1 - 5, 2010

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Inspection Scope and Objectives

The scope of the Inspection included a review of Mission Management and the Political Economic, Commercial Economic, Consular and Common Services programs. The inspection objectives were to:

- Assess the effectiveness of the leadership and management practices of the Head of Mission (HOM) and the Mission Management team;
- Review the alignment of plans and activities, and program integration to Government of Canada and departmental objectives and priorities;
- Assess the adequacy of management controls and systems, procedures and the reliability of information for decision making and accountability purposes;
- Determine the extent of compliance with legislation, regulations and operating policies;
- Evaluate the use of resources to determine whether they are judiciously used and whether value-for-money is received; and,
- Make recommendations, where warranted, to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Mission and its programs.

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

During the Inspection, inspection issues and lines of enquiry were further refined from information gathered through interviews with the Head of Mission and program managers, a meeting with Locally Engaged Staff (LES) representatives of the LES Management Consultative Board, individual interviews with staff, and results of other documentation reviewed. The level of inspection work was therefore based on issues and information identified and gathered at all levels: HQ, Mission management and Mission operations.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An Inspection of Mission Management, the Political Economic Relations and Public Affairs, Commercial Economic, Consular and Common Services programs was conducted in Athens from November 1 to 5, 2010. The previous audit of these programs took place in 2005.

The review of overall Mission Management demonstrates that core management practices and controls are in place and operating effectively. The Mission has strong communication processes and staff are dedicated and knowledgeable. Management is aware of the need to develop a Business Continuity Plan and have indicated an intent to complete it.

The Chancery is on the Departmental priority list for relocation. The building does not meet current Canadian seismic standards, does not have *** and has inadequate fire exits from the building. As a result, all major projects for the Chancery have been postponed and the Mission and Headquarters are working to identify potential sites for a new chancery.

The Political Economic Relations and Public Affairs (PERPA) Program is led by a *** Program Manager (PM) who is managing the Program ***. The Program will need to expand upon the strategic objectives identified in the Mission Planning and Reporting template to develop program-specific strategic and operational plans.

An *** Senior Trade Commissioner (STC) leads the Commercial Economic (CE) Program. Overall management of the CE Program is effective. The STC will need to scale back the Program's plan to work within the resource levels available. The STC demonstrated *** leadership when he stepped in to manage the Consular Program during a period when the Mission lacked a Management Consular Officer (MCO).

The MCO, *** Program Manager, manages both the Consular and Common Services Programs. A high level of service to clients was maintained during the period when there was no MCO at the Mission, due to the dedication and knowledge of key members of the team. The MCO has quickly gained a good grasp of the operations and understands the many activities for which her team is accountable. The next step will be to develop workplans for the Programs.

Since her arrival, she has implemented changes within the Consular Program to improve operations and strengthen communication. The Program was given Consular responsibility for Cyprus last year and, while they have recently received an additional position in the Section, they are still adjusting to the increased workload. Staff are providing a good level of service to clients, of which a significant part is for notarial services. However, some of these services may be beyond the Program's mandate and inconsistent with guidelines from Headquarters.

The Official Languages Act is respected and promoted by Mission management.

A total of 40 inspection recommendations are raised in the report; 39 are addressed to the Mission and one is addressed to Headquarters. Management has responded to each recommendation indicating action already taken or decisions made, as well as future action. Of the 40 recommendations, management has stated that 24 have been implemented. For each of the remaining 16 recommendations, management has indicated the initiatives in progress or the intended future action.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

MISSION MANAGEMENT

1.1 Overview

1.1.1 The Embassy in Athens is a small mission with seven Canada-Based Staff (CBS) and 24 Locally-Engaged Staff (LES). It is responsible for departmental program delivery in Greece and recently was given accreditation for Cyprus.

1.1.2 The Mission is led by a substantive EX-01 Head of Mission (HOM) in an EX-02 position. The Mission had been without a HOM for a year prior to her arrival. Currently on her second assignment as HOM, she is well regarded by her staff and has made significant progress in addressing certain management challenges. She has led the Mission through several difficult periods, such as a protracted period when the Mission lacked a permanent Management Consular Officer (MCO), the riots of December 2008, and frequent strikes and demonstrations.

1.2 Mission Management

Key Mission Management Criteria	Meets	Needs Improvement	Does Not Meet
The mission's strategic objectives are consistent with Government and DFAIT priorities and guide staff performance measurement objectives.	X		
DFAIT programs have developed operational plans based on strategic objectives and advice/guidance from Headquarters (HQ).	X		
The Committee on Mission Management (CMM) is an effective forum to review and make decisions on mission policies and management issues.	X		
The Locally-engaged staff Management Consultation Board (LESMCB) is an effective forum for dialogue between mission management and LES.	X		
Mission management ensures that employees remain informed of key priorities and common services policy decisions.	X		
Minutes of committee meetings, particularly CMM, are made available to all staff, as appropriate.	X		
The *Official Languages Act* is respected and promoted by mission management.	X		
Canadian public service values and ethics are promoted and reinforced, and employees are aware of available support resources (values and ethics, staff relations, etc.).	X		

1.2.1 Core management practices are in place and operating effectively at the Mission.

1.2.2 During the course of the Inspection visit, the issue of position reclassification was raised by several local staff. Rationales for expectations of upward classification ranged from a sense of being undervalued to increased workload, which indicates a lack of understanding of the classification process. This has had an impact on morale. To manage expectations, Mission Management should ensure that staff are aware of the purpose of classifications and associated procedures.

Official Languages

1.2.3 The Official Languages Act is respected and effectively promoted by mission management. Interviews and review of signage demonstrated that information and service could be provided to clients in the official language of their choice. Areas for improvement were identified, however, in the Consular Program.

1.3 Management Controls

Key Management Control Criteria	Meets	Needs Improvement	Does Not Meet
The mission's committee structure meets minimum requirements based on size (Health and Safety, Security, Contract Review, etc.).	X		
Mission committees are meeting regularly and effectively discharging their governance responsibilities.	X		
Program managers are provided regular financial/budget updates to facilitate effective management and decision making.	X		
Security policies and regulations are respected and promoted under the leadership of mission management.	X		
The appropriate authority participates in the quarterly reconciliation of passport inventory and signs for the assets on hand.	X		
The appropriate authority reviews and signs-off on the mission's bank reconciliations on a monthly basis.	X		
The mission has a plan to ensure the continuity of operations in the event of a major disruption or catastrophic event (i.e. business continuity plan).		X	
Mission hospitality guidelines are appropriate and reviewed annually by CMM.	X		
Hospitality diaries are properly supported, demonstrate value-for-money and are used in alignment with mission objectives.	X		

Key Management Control Criteria	Meets	Needs Improvement	Does Not Meet
All employees have performance objectives set, annual appraisals occur, and a coordinated approach is taken to training and development.	X		

1.3.1 Management controls are for the most part in place and operating effectively.

1.3.2 While the Mission does not have a formal Business Continuity Plan (BCP), the Management team is aware of the need to have one. The Mission is currently relying on the Consular Contingency Plan as an interim BCP and plans to develop a BCP.

1.4 Recommendations to the Mission

1.4.1 The Mission should ensure that staff members are made aware of the purpose of classification exercises, as well as the process and procedures.

1.4.2 The Mission should ensure that a Business Continuity Plan is developed.

Mission Actions and Timeframes

1.4.1 Implemented February 2011 - Program Mangers discussed classification issues with staff members as appropriate, consistent with previous discussions on the same subject. Clarifications were also provided regarding the SR400 process which included a submission for increased capacity for the Commercial Economic Program.

1.4.2 In Progress for July 2011 - Mission Security Committee initially discussed the need of BCP before the inspection. Template was obtained and discussed at the CMM on April 18th, 2011. Work on the BCP is now in progress.

POLITICAL ECONOMIC Relations and Public Affairs (PERPA)

2.1 Overview

2.1.1 The PERPA Program is managed by a first-time FS-03 Program Manager (PM) who is supported by an LE-09 Political and Public Affairs Officer and an LE-06 Political and Public Affairs Assistant.

Budget	2010-2011
Operations	$ 8,300
Travel	12,500
Hospitality	800
Post Initiative Fund	3,000
Total	**$ 24,600**

2.1.2 Canada-Greece bilateral relations are friendly and active, and both countries share many foreign policy objectives. A network of bilateral treaties provides an effective framework for productive economic relations and cooperation on relevant international issues. Close multilateral cooperation is often seen at the United Nations, the Human Security Network, the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, la Francophonie and NATO. Canada and Greece also enjoy close cultural cooperation, evidenced by Canadian participation at the important film festivals of Athens and Thessaloniki.

2.1.3 The Mission is also responsible for bilateral relations with Cyprus. Canada and Cyprus enjoy close relations through our shared membership in the United Nations, the Commonwealth and la Francophonie. The value of our bilateral relations was demonstrated in August 2006, when Cyprus played a vital role in the evacuation of 14,000 Canadians from Lebanon to Cyprus and then to Canada.

2.2 Planning and Program Management

Key PERPA Program Management Criteria	Meets	Needs Improvement	Does Not Meet
PERPA plans are aligned with the priorities and objectives outlined in the Mission Plan (MPR system) and informed by departmental and geographic bureau guidance and objectives.	X		
PERPA plans outline intended outcomes and results are measurable.		X	

Key PERPA Program Management Criteria	Meets	Needs Improvement	Does Not Meet
Officer roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and have been communicated to all staff.	X		
Internal communications within the program effectively support program delivery.	X		

2.2.1 The Program benefits from a PM who demonstrates an understanding of core management practices. Effective communication and an understanding of planning processes were demonstrated during the Inspection.

2.2.2 The PM was posted with only the Program Manager Abroad and delegated signing authorities training. As New Way Forward, Advocacy and other PERPA stream training were not identified as mandatory, the PM was not given the time to complete this training prior to her arrival in Athens. The PM was also not provided handover materials that outlined the current state of Program initiatives, past activities and results, and identified key contacts. These will need to be developed for her successor.

2.2.3 The PERPA sections of the Mission Planning and Reporting (MPR) system were developed by the previous PM and, although limited in scope, are aligned with Mission and Department priorities. The PM identified the need to undertake an environmental scan, review the current objectives and sample plans from other missions in an effort to further refine the Program's strategic plan.

2.2.4 This will allow the PM to expand upon PERPA objectives in the MPR through consultation with the HOM and Headquarters (HQ). This strategic plan can then form the basis of an overall operational plan which identifies specific activities or initiatives, defines a clear alignment to priorities, highlights resource needs and partnering opportunities, and clarifies risks and mitigating strategies.

2.2.5 While the MPR has identified criteria to measure success, it is predominantly quantitative in nature. In order to serve as a more effective tool to manage for results, further development of qualitative criteria will be necessary.

2.3 Implementation

Key PERPA Implementation Criteria	Meets	Needs Improvement	Does Not Meet
Strategic objectives and plans have been translated into individual or team work plans.		X	
Activities and initiatives are aligned with the Mission's key priorities and with the principles of the New Way Forward PERPA Renewal initiative.	X		

Key PERPA Implementation Criteria	Meets	Needs Improvement	Does Not Meet
Program reporting is in-line with Mission and government objectives, timely and relevant.	X		
The program develops and maintains a contact base that meets program's needs and objectives.	X		
Relations with other mission programs facilitate program delivery (i.e. public affairs).	X		
The program facilitates a mission-wide coordinated approach to advocacy and common messaging.	X		

2.3.1 The Program has established an operational work plan which identifies key activities and resources and is aligned with Department and Government priorities. The plan does not, however, appear to be driven by the current objectives of the MPR.

2.3.2 The Program should ensure clear alignment with the MPR when drafting the PERPA operational plan. Deliverables, results measurement criteria and resource allocations should be identified and the plan should define, as necessary, the role of the HOM in an event or activity.

2.3.3 In order to address the PM's planning and training needs, a short-term individual workplan will have to be developed and priorities set. This plan should address both strategic and operational planning, training needs, Program management and ongoing PERPA activities. The PM should establish set "quiet hours" for training and management activities during the period covered by this plan.

2.4 Performance Measurement

Key PERPA Performance Measurement Criteria	Meets	Needs Improvement	Does Not Meet
The PERPA program has an established performance measurement system in place to monitor activities towards the achievement of objectives.		X	
The PERPA Program assesses performance against their strategy / objectives and plans, and provides a high-level assessment of performance through the MPR system at the end of the fiscal year.		X	
Hospitality diaries demonstrate value-for-money and alignment with priorities.	X		

2.4.1 As noted in paragraph 2.2.5, the MPR has identified predominantly quantitative criteria to measure results. While these provide an understanding of the level of activity or participation, they do not provide a means to gauge the effectiveness of the activity or initiative in relation to the objectives of the Program.

2.4.2 The Program will need to consider short, medium and long term criteria that reflect both quantitative and qualitative results. The short term performance measures will be of primary use to the PM as they assess the utility of events or initiatives through "lessons learned" analysis and aid in revisiting the operational plan. Medium to long term performance measures can be of use in the operational plan, but will be most useful in assessing performance through the MPR at the end of the fiscal year.

2.5 Recommendations to the Mission

2.5.1 The Program should revisit the Political Economic sections of the MPR.

2.5.2 The Program should ensure that the operational plan and individual work plans are aligned with the MPR.

2.5.3 The Program Manager should develop a short term individual work plan.

2.5.4 The Program Manager should establish set quiet hours to address training needs and administrative requirements.

2.5.5 The Program should identify short, medium and long term criteria (both quantitative and qualitative) for management of the Program and annual performance reporting.

Mission Actions and Timeframes

2.5.1 Implemented March 2011 - The Political/Economic sections of the MPR were revisited in March 2011 and as a result MPR reporting for 2010-11 included qualitative measures. Beginning 2011-12, the MPR will be closely aligned with PERPA planning and HOM PMA.

2.5.2 Implemented November 2010 - For FY 2010-11, work plans were aligned with the PERPA operational plan. For 2011-12, full alignment with the MPR will be achieved.

2.5.3 Implemented January 2011 - Work on an individual work plan began in September 2010 and was translated into a full PERPA Plan completed in January 2011, including consultations with HOM, program staff and other programs.

2.5.4 Implemented January 2011 - Quiet hours were implemented the first week of January 2011. Four hours per week were allotted to each of

the PM and the PERPA officer, and two hours per week to the program assistant.

2.5.5 Implemented January 2011 - Using a PERPA planning template from another mission, a full PERPA plan including performance criteria was developed in consultation with the HOM and other Program Managers. PMP commitments were adjusted accordingly.

2.6 Recommendation to the Canada Foreign Service Institute (CFSI)

2.6.1 CFSI, in conjunction with the Assignment and Pool Management Division (HFP), should identify essential or mandatory baseline training for each stream, to ensure that new program managers have the necessary preparation to manage their programs effectively.

CFSI Action and Timeframe

2.6.1 Once an officer is selected for an assignment abroad as program manager, an email is sent by CFSA, noting the list of mandatory or highly recommended courses for all program managers, including the Essentials of Managing in the Public Service, Training on the Sub-delegation of Staffing Authorities, Program Managers abroad and Supervision at the Mission. The message provides them with the names of CFSI managers by training programs so that each officer can obtain personalized information on the training preparing them for their specific responsibilities. Upon request, training managers at CFSI provide a list of required or highly recommended courses by program, such as the Global Learning Initiative course for commercial program managers, and the New Way Forward for political officers. Some agents contact our managers, others do not. It should be noted that all officers have direct access to the electronic Pre-Posting Training Planner and Learning Roadmaps for each stream that are available on the intranet of the Institute of Foreign Service.

The officers in each stream have access to a full range of courses during their careers. In these lines of courses we find courses that develop the skills of officers, for example Creating Powerful Presentations, Writing for DFAIT, or on negotiations, and courses that touch more on knowledge, such human rights, energy issues and economics. Please refer to the Learning Roadmap for more details.

Please note however, that very few courses are mandatory and it is up to each officer to take charge of their development plan and their pre-posting training according to their needs and requirements for the position he or she will have to fill.

COMMERCIAL ECONOMIC (CE)

3.1 Overview

3.1.1 The Commercial Economic Program in Athens is managed by an *** Senior Trade Commissioner (STC), supported by an LE-09 Trade Commissioner and two Trade Commissioner Assistants (LE-06 and LE-05).

3.1.2 In recent years, the Mission has dealt with a succession of gaps of leadership in the Common Services and Consular programs. During the most recent period, the STC devoted a significant portion of his time to the management and oversight of the Consular Program. With the arrival of the new Management Consular Officer in the summer of 2010, the STC has been able to re-focus his time onto CE management.

Budget	2010-2011
Operations	$ 7,600
Travel	1,600
Hospitality	800
Client Service Fund (CSF)	12,000
Total	**$ 22,000**

3.1.3 Both the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank have ranked Greece as having the world's 27th largest economy, with a GDP of $329,924 million in 2009 *(World Bank)*. Greece and Canada share excellent economic and trade relations, with 2009 bilateral trade of merchandise having reached $252.5 million and Canadian exports to Greece totalling $111.8 million.

3.1.4 Bilateral commercial relations with Cyprus (the Program's other territory) remain relatively modest, with exports in 2008 totalling $17.8 million (primarily machinery, wood products and medical instruments). And imports from Cyprus totalling $2.9 million (largely fruits, nuts, fish and seafood).

3.2 Planning and Program Management

Key CE Program Management Criteria	Meets	Needs Improvement	Does Not Meet
Program objectives reflect departmental plans and priorities, including partner departments where applicable.	X		
Performance targets are defined, clear and measurable.	X		
Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and have been communicated to all staff.	X		

Key CE Program Management Criteria	Meets	Needs Improvement	Does Not Meet
Internal program communication effectively supports program delivery.	X		

3.2.1 The CE Program makes use of appropriate planning mechanisms, identifying priority sectors through reviews of needs, capability and interest. The Program is, however, having difficulty in managing within its resource base.

3.2.2 Since 2008, the STC has been attempting to re-structure the Program in light of the transfer of an LE-09 position out of the Mission in 2007. The Program had approached Headquarters with two separate reclassification options that it believed would address its perceived needs in relation to its established Commercial Economic Plan (CEP).

3.2.3 In both cases, the Europe and Eurasia Commercial Relations Division (GUC) informed the Mission that positions would not be reclassified and that the Program should review the CEP to ensure that tasks assigned reflect current classification levels. GUC has also indicated that the Mission could use the Strategic Review 400 (SR400) process to try to expand its capacity in order to deal with the demands resulting from the CEP.

3.2.4 While the STC has revised the priority sectors in response to the loss of the resource, there continues to be greater pressure on the team than the configuration can handle. The STC should therefore re-examine the plan and scale it back to meet the resources available to the Program.

3.3 Implementation

Key CE Implementation Criteria	Meets	Needs Improvement	Does Not Meet
Business plan objectives and those outlined in management's PMAs/PMPs and appropriately cascade down into officer PMPs.	X		
Activities and initiatives are aligned with the Mission's key priorities.	X		
The program utilizes TRIO to facilitate client relationship management.		X	
Staff use of TRIO is monitored to ensure activities are reported appropriately and accurately reflect the work undertaken.		X	
The InfoCentre function has defined objectives and responsibilities.	N/A	N/A	N/A

3.3.1 The Program's plans cascade down to staff PMPs and are aligned with the Mission's key priorities. Operational planning within the Program is undertaken in an informal manner through the use of individual schedules or calendars. Consideration should be given to the development of an overall operational plan with activities, milestones, performance measures and accountabilities that demonstrate links to priority sectors.

3.3.2 While TRIO has been implemented at the Mission, it is not being used as fully as it should. The Mission has a *** connection which has at varying points in the business day resulted in slow responses for a number of Internet applications (e-mail, web browsers, TRIO). As a result of this, staff use TRIO but do not see the utility of this application in the same way they saw that of the WINOnline application.

3.3.3 TRIO is therefore viewed as a Headquarters reporting tool that does not have local benefits and staff are concerned with the impact on resources that reporting through the application has had on the Program.

3.3.4 All staff noted that the system is unduly complicated and that there have been issues with data loss during network slowdowns. As a result, staff have been reticent to enter data into the system in a timely fashion, causing erroneous reporting through the "dashboard" tool.

3.3.5 The PM observed that it was not until six months after he took up this role that he was made aware of a manager's component to the application that would allow him to efficiently track the use of TRIO. While he is now aware of this component, the slowness of the application at the Mission makes monitoring a more onerous task than it should be.

3.4 Performance Measurement

Key CE Performance Measurement Criteria	Meets	Needs Improvement	Does Not Meet
Tools and mechanisms are in place to measure and monitor performance of the program.	X		
Program employees are involved in the performance measurement process.	X		
Hospitality diaries are maintained in a fashion that demonstrates value-for-money and alignment with priorities.	X		

3.4.1 The Program primarily makes use of quantitative criteria for performance measurement, as this is the nature of the tool available for monitoring (TRIO). Consideration should also be given to developing and using qualitative criteria in the medium and long term as a complement to the quantitative criteria. These can be recorded in reports and hospitality diaries so that Program Managers, HQ and staff have an understanding of not just the level of activity, but also the potential value of the event.

3.4.2 The Program demonstrates an understanding that there are external factors will have an impact on the achievement of certain success indicators and that these are areas outside of the Program's control.

3.5 Recommendation to the Mission

3.5.1 The STC should re-examine the CE plan and scale it back to match the resources available to the Program.

Mission Action and Timeframe

3.5.1 In Progress for May 2011 - Draft CE Plan for 2011-12 was submitted on schedule on February 11, 2011. It was developed to be consistent with resources available and was revised in late March 2011 following the reduction to Program's CSF funding. CE Plan will be further adjusted following feedback from headquarters which will be available by April 26, 2011. The CE Plan for 2011-12 will be finalized and submitted on schedule by May 13, 2011.

Mission submitted request under the SR400 process to expand the Program's capacity, as recommended by GUC. Submission received a favourable initial review but Mission is still awaiting final decision. CE Plan will be reviewed and adjusted as necessary following the completion of this process.

CONSULAR PROGRAM

4.1 Overview

4.1.1 The Consular Program is managed by an AS-05 MCO who arrived at the mission only three months before the Inspection visit and is on *** as a Program Manager. She is supported by an LE-09 Senior Consular Program Officer, an LE-07 Consular Officer, an LE-07 Passport and Citizenship Officer, an LE-06 Consular Assistant and two LE-05 Passport Writer/Consular Assistants. There is also an Honorary Consul located in Thessaloniki, Greece. The Mission took over responsibility for the Consulate in Cyprus in October 2009 and a new Honorary Consul was appointed in Nicosia in July 2010.

Budget	2010-2011
Travel	4,200
Hospitality	300
Total	**$ 4,500**

4.1.2 The Mission manages a heavy consular case load, with approximately 2,000 passport services and around 350 citizenship applications and 2,500 notarial requests annually. There are 832 Canadian citizens in the Registration of Canadians Abroad (ROCA) database for Greece and 128 for Cyprus. The estimated number of Canadians residing in Greece is 22,000, with approximately 120,000 visitors yearly, while the estimated number of Canadians residing in Cyprus is 6,500.

4.2 Program Management

Key Consular Program Management Criteria	Meets	Needs Improvement	Does Not Meet
Consular work is planned and prioritized.	X		
The Consular Contingency Plan is up to date.	X		
The Duty Officer Manual is up to date.	X		
The Mission has ongoing dialogue with key local authorities to facilitate program delivery.	X		
Regular staff meetings are held to communicate new directives, set priorities, plan program and operational direction, and to ensure staff are aware of case management issues.	X		

4.2.1 Overall, the Program is *** managed by the MCO. Communication is good within the Program and the MCO *** consults her staff on a regular basis. Since her arrival, she has implemented several changes to improve operations:

- bi-weekly meetings with all Consular staff have been instituted;
- each staff member has been given their own petty cash (which is used as a float) to improve accountability, rather than having all staff share one petty cash;
- the Program has stopped using a drop box for passport and citizenship applications (now staff accept them in person); and
- the MCO is available to meet clients herself when necessary.

These changes to the management of the Program are viewed positively by staff.

4.2.2 While Consular staff are knowledgeable and aware of their responsibilities and tasks, no documented workplan and/or regular list of tasks exist to guide staff and provide management with a basis for making decisions regarding workload and priorities.

4.2.3 The Mission was given Consular responsibility for Cyprus last year without additional incremental resources, and staff are still adjusting to the additional workload associated with this. A **new LE-05 position has recently been created and staffed, which should help reduce workload pressures. Given the addition of this new position, the MCO and staff will need to assess work processes (see section 4.4) and the distribution of tasks so as to ensure efficiencies and determine how best to** allocate work. The Program will also need to find a balance between maintaining adequate segregation of duties while reducing unnecessary duplication of tasks.

4.2.4 The Consular Program is responsible for obtaining overflight clearance for Canadian military aircraft. Staff noted that this is a time-consuming and high-volume task which can arise at the last minute, making planning and prioritizing a challenge. Time spent on this activity should be recorded in COMIP so that a workload analysis can be performed and discussed with HQ.

4.2.5 The Program spends a significant amount of time providing certification and notarial services. It maintains a file of the approximately 20 different letter templates that are most commonly used. Initial discussions with the Consular Policy and Initiatives Division (CLP) indicate that the Mission may be providing services beyond its mandate and, in some cases, providing services inconsistent with guidelines (e.g. providing letters in languages other than French or English). This represents a significant workload pressure for the Program and should be reviewed with CLP.

4.3 Client Service

Key Consular Client Service Criteria	Meets	Needs Improvement	Does Not Meet
Service standards, a fee schedule and a copy of the official receipt are posted in public areas in both official languages.			X

Key Consular Client Service Criteria	Meets	Needs Improvement	Does Not Meet
The program monitors adherence to service standards and makes adjustments where necessary.	X		
The program has the capacity to provide services to Canadians in the official language of their choice.	X		
The mission promotes client feedback mechanisms and takes corrective action, when warranted.	X		
The mission has provided the Honorary Consul (HonCon) with a mandate letter which establishes roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities. Performance is reviewed annually.	X		
There is adequate liaison/support from the mission for the HonCon.	X		

4.3.1 Overall, the Program is providing a good level of service to clients and is meeting client service standards as set out by the Department and Passport Canada.

4.3.2 When the MCO arrived, she reinstated the practice of having staff meet clients in person to receive passport and citizenship applications, rather than only using a drop-box system. This has reduced the number of incomplete applications received and has improved client services. The Mission also proactively seeks feedback from clients; comments received have been positive.

4.3.3 Service standards, a fee schedule and a copy of an official receipt are not posted in the waiting area, and some of the information that is displayed was outdated (for example H1N1 letters from 2009) or had spelling mistakes in the French version. Information pamphlets are also not made easily available to clients, as they are all kept by the Receptionist.

4.3.4 It was noted that dates entered by staff into the Passport Management Program (PMP) system may not follow established guidelines. Such practices affect the determination of whether the Mission is meeting service standards or not.

4.3.5 Honorary Consuls are provided with an annual tasking letter, outlining their roles and responsibilities. Appraisals are also completed. As a good practice the Mission should also have a signed agreement in place with the Honorary Consuls, defining the expenses and amounts that will be reimbursed on a monthly basis. While the Mission does have a verbal agreement with the Honorary Consuls, it needs to be formalized.

4.4 Internal Controls

Key Consular Internal Control Criteria	Meets	Needs Improvement	Does Not Meet
A certified CBS signs-off on all passports, except in extenuating circumstances with the approval of Passport Canada.	X		
Client documents and personal information are properly stored and secured.		X	
Completed passport application forms and related documentation are securely destroyed 60 business days following the end of the month that they were submitted.			X
There is adequate segregation of duties for staff handling revenues.		X	
Official receipts are issued to Consular clients and revenue is recorded on a record of fees received form.	X		
Revenues are transferred to finance once $500 is reached (once a week if less than $500), a reconciliation is completed in the presence of the transferring employee and an official receipt is issued.	X		
Upon receipt of new passport stock, two CBS verify the receipt of all assets, sign and return the transmittal note.	X		
The primary inventory of passport blanks (temporary and emergency), ID labels, OBS labels, stamps, and seals are stored in according to official guidelines.	X		
Movement of assets is recorded on an inventory log and initialled by the CBS custodian and the employee receiving the asset.	X		
LES are allocated an appropriate working inventory that is controlled by a daily log (passports issued, spoiled, returned to safe storage) and unused inventory is stored securely at the end of each day.		X	
Inventory is physically counted, reconciled and signed-off at the end of each month by two staff, one of whom must be a CBS.	X		
The appropriate authority participates in and signs-off on quarterly passport inventory reconciliations.	X		
Official seals and stamps are properly inventoried, secured and access provided to designated staff only.	X		

4.4.1 There is a need to strengthen ***. In addition, all staff have *** making it difficult to hold staff accountable as no one is responsible for it. It was noted that there were *** observation labels held as working stock in the Section, which far exceeds the Program's needs.

4.4.2 Currently the cash drawer in the cash register is not used, as all staff members receive payment from clients and keep the funds separate from one another. Each staff member is also responsible for completing their own Record of Fees Received form (EXT119). To improve efficiency for the management ***the Mission should review the processes and consider centralizing *** responsibilities with one individual.

4.4.3 The implementation of petty cash accounts for all staff members who receive payment was a good initiative to improve accountability. ***.

4.4.4 Official receipts (in the form of a cash register tape) are issued to each client in their name.

4.4.5 While the filing system is well maintained and allows for easy retrieval of files/information, some files were almost 20 years old. Certain files also contained copies of all notarial services provided by the Program and included copies of all supporting documents, which do not need to be retained.

4.4.6 On a monthly basis, the Mission generates an aged case report for passports from the Passport Management Program (PMP) in order to ensure proper follow-up is made regarding pending applications. However, there is a backlog of passport worksheets that date from April 2010 that have not been scanned so the cases can be closed in the PMP system.

4.4.7 Observations regarding passport processing which should improve efficiencies and the protection of information include:

- using the rejection letter templates with check boxes (provided by Passport Canada) rather than writing individual tailored letters;
- providing clients with the pick-up date for their passports at the time of payment, instead of calling them when the passports are ready; and,
- reviewing the current process of passport document retention to identify ways to reduce the risk of losing documentation such as applications in-progress, birth certificates or citizenship cards.

4.5 Recommendations to the Mission

4.5.1 The Mission should develop a workplan for the Program and undertake a review of duties and work processes to ensure processes are efficient.

4.5.2 **The Mission, in consultation with CLP, should review the list of notarial services that are being provided to Consular clients to ensure that they are in line with departmental policies/guidelines.**

4.5.3 **Pamphlets and applications should be made available to clients in the waiting area and any information displayed should be up-to-date and continue to be in both official languages. Service standards, a fee schedule and a copy of an official receipt, in both official languages, should also be displayed.**

4.5.4 **Staff should enter dates into the PMP system according to established guidelines to ensure an accurate reflection of service standards.**

4.5.5 *****.**

4.5.6 *****.**

4.5.7 **The amount of working stock of observation labels kept in the Section should be reviewed.**

4.5.8 **Consideration should be given to having only one staff member responsible for receiving payments from clients each day, which would allow for the use of the ***.**

4.5.9 **The Mission should ensure the timely destruction of files and reassess the need to keep copies of notarial services.**

4.5.10 **The Mission should implement the following:**

- **use of a rejection letter templates provided by Passport Canada;**
- **provide pick-up dates for passports to clients; and,**
- **improve the current method of securing working passport application documents.**

Mission Actions and Timeframes

4.5.1 **In Progress for December 2011 - A baseline workplan was developed in February 2011. Further development of this workplan is conditional on the review of the MCI (Manual of Consular Instructions) being undertaken at HQ. Meanwhile, the program's priorities are very well identified and communicated to staff, including through the PMP process.**

4.5.2 **In Progress for December 2011 - Consultation with CLP was done in February 2011. At that time, the mission was advised to wait for the revised MCI to come out. As instructed, mission is awaiting issuance of the revised MCI before proceeding further.**

4.4.3 **Implemented November 2010 - Up-to-date publications, applications, service standards, a fee schedule & a copy of an official receipt - all in both official languages - were made available in all waiting areas.**

4.5.4 **Implemented November 2010 - Both CLP and PPSD were contacted in order to resolve some of these inconsistencies. Issue has been rectified.**

4.5.5 **In Progress for July 2011 - A "dutch door" will be installed closing off the *** from the rest of the floor and restricting the rest of the embassy staff. The door will not be locked, which will permit occupant of the floor to access the fire exit if there is ever an emergency.**

4.5.6 **Implemented January 2011 - The *** Officer is now the sole custodian *** is the only Consular employee who has access ***.**

4.5.7 **Implemented November 2010 - The stock of observation labels was reduced ***.**

4.5.8 **Implemented November 2010 - The matter was given thorough consideration following the Inspection. However, it was determined that this procedure would not be practical given the division of labour.***.**

4.5.9 **Implemented June 2011 - Mission will only keep copy of the receipt for services and none of the notarized documents.**

4.5.10 **Following the Inspection debriefing:**

- **Implemented June 2011 - The Consular section will now only use the established templates.**
- **Implemented September 2010 - Pick-up slips with pick-up dates are provided to walk-in clients. The only clients called are those who have sent in their application by mail and wish to have a courier pick up their passport, instead of the mission putting it back in the mail. Clients are advised of the arrival of their passport and make appropriate arrangements to have it picked up by a courier company.**

- **Implemented November 2010 - Working files are now placed in separate plastic envelopes. This procedure has improved the securing of working passport application documents.**

COMMON SERVICES

5.1 Overview

5.1.1 The Common Services Program is managed by the MCO, who is supported by two CBS, seven Locally-Engaged office staff and three Locally-Engaged non-office staff.

Budget	2010-2011
Operations	1,204,055
Capital	81,105
LES Salaries	509,851
Total	**$ 1,795,011**

5.1.2 Until the arrival of the current MCO, the Mission had been without a permanent MCO for the previous nine months. Although the other two program managers stepped in to keep the Program running and some temporary duty officers were sent from HQ, the Mission suffered from inconsistent leadership in the Program. It was in a large part due to the dedication and competence of key LES that the Mission was able to maintain a good level of service to clients. Now that operations have stabilised, there is a need to re-establish regular Program activities and ensure that plans and procedures are in place to achieve Mission objectives.

5.1.3 The Mission is operating in a difficult environment, which makes the accomplishment of day-to-day activities challenging at times. As a result, Mission staff must spend more time and effort to carry out regular business. Frequent strikes, demonstrations and power outages also make it more time consuming and difficult to perform work.

Program Management

Key Common Services Program Management Criteria	Meets	Needs Improvement	Does Not Meet
An operational plan has been developed and incorporates key mission and international platform objectives, along with measurable expected results.		X	
The program has documented and communicated administrative policies and procedures to guide management, staff and clients.		X	
The Common Services program actively seeks to implement best practices, improve efficiencies and reduce operating costs.	X		

Key Common Services Program Management Criteria	Meets	Needs Improvement	Does Not Meet
There are regular staff meetings in the Common Services Program to review priorities for the period and to follow up the implementation of plans.	X		

5.1.4 The MCO, who has been at the Mission for three months, has already impressed staff ***. Despite her short time at the Mission, she has a good grasp of Mission operations and understands the many tasks that need to be accomplished to ensure that the Mission runs as efficiently and effectively as possible.

5.1.5 In consultation with her staff, it will be important for the MCO to develop a workplan for the Program which identifies priority tasks and assigns resources and achievable deadlines. HOM support will be necessary to ensure that the MCO has the time and latitude to manage her programs, as there is a potential for burnout with so many tasks to be completed if the plan is not adhered to. Quiet hours would also assist the MCO to focus and concentrate on necessary activities.

5.1.6 New policies are discussed at the Committee on Mission Management (CMM) and are circulated by email and saved on InfoBank. They are also communicated and discussed at townhall meetings when necessary. However, in some cases, a lack of key guidelines has limited the MCO’s ability to hold staff accountable for delegated responsibilities. Such directives are important as they guide both staff and clients and ensure consistent application of policies and procedures.

5.1.7 Communication within the Program is strong, with good formal and informal mechanisms in place. The MCO holds weekly meetings after the CMM, alternating between staff in the Consular and Common Services programs. Follow-up to meetings would be facilitated by sharing written records of decision (deadlines, assignment of work, etc.). Non-office common service staff are included in these meetings and communication with the Official Residence staff is effective.

5.1.8 The MCO has an open-door policy and is available whenever staff request ad hoc meetings. While it is important that the MCO is accessible, work-related issues are often raised one by one by staff. This can be disruptive and forces the MCO to make individual decisions on isolated issues. Weekly meetings with section heads should be instituted to review all work related requests as a group and allow the MCO to review progress on outstanding work.

Client Service

Key Common Services Client Service Criteria	Meets	Needs Improvement	Does Not Meet
Service standards have been established and communicated to clients.		X	
Services provided reflect fair and equitable allocation and access to common services for all mission programs.	X		
A mechanism is in place to solicit and receive client feedback and corrective action is taken when warranted.		X	
Any hub and spoke relationships are governed by an agreement outlining the roles and responsibilities of each mission.	N/A	N/A	N/A

5.1.9 Overall, clients indicated that they receive good services from the Program with some improvements to be made in the Physical Resources Section. Service standards date from 2005 and, once updated, should be communicated to both staff and clients. Service standards updates will allow staff to better plan and prioritize their work and manage client expectations.

5.1.10 While communications within the Mission are good, a formal mechanism to receive feedback regarding the quality and timeliness of services provided by the Program would also allow for improvements to be made.

Recommendations to the Mission

5.1.11 A workplan should be developed for the Program, identifying priorities, allocating resources and setting deadlines.

5.1.12 Service standards should be updated, taking into account local circumstances. In addition, policies and procedures should be documented to guide staff and clients. These documents should be approved by the CMM and communicated to all staff.

5.1.13 Records of decision from meetings should be kept and circulated to staff.

Mission Actions and Timeframes

5.1.11 In Progress for June 2011 - Upon arrival at the mission in August 2010, the MCO identified that a workplan was required for the Program. The MCO is currently making good progress on completing it.

5.1.12 **In Progress for December 2011 - Work is well underway. This is a major undertaking as services standards had not been updated since 2005. The process requires critical input from staff in each of administrative sections. For this reason, the document can only be completed in upon the return of the mission's accountant from maternity leave in fall 2011.**

5.1.13 **Implemented August 2010 - This measure has been implemented fully since the arrival of the MCO in August 2010. Regular admin meetings have been taking place and meeting minutes recorded, circulated to all staff and saved/available on Infobank.**

5.2 Human Resources

5.2.1 The Human Resources (HR) function is well managed by an *** LE-07 Personnel Officer with oversight provided by the MCO. The Personnel Officer is assisted by the LE-05 Administrative Assistant and also supervises the LE-04 Receptionist and two drivers; the Personnel Officer is also responsible for communications with the Official Residence (OR) staff.

Program Management

Key HR Management Criteria	Meets	Needs Improvement	Does Not Meet
Responsibilities for human resource (HR) activities have been clearly defined, delegated and communicated to all staff.	X		
LES have been provided with the most recent version of the LES Handbook.	X		
The LESMCB is representative of mission programs and levels and is utilized by both LES and mission management to facilitate communication.	X		
An HR plan has been developed and submitted to headquarters (HQ).	X		
A coordinated approach is taken with regards to training and a budget established.	X		
Mechanisms are in place to monitor completion of employee's performance evaluations, CBS and LES.	X		
Employee and position files are complete and maintained separately.	X		
Job descriptions are up-to-date and signed by the incumbent and the supervisor.	X		

Key HR Management Criteria	Meets	Needs Improvement	Does Not Meet
The mission records LES accrued leave, deductions and current balances.	X		

5.2.2 Overall, HR management is effective and functioning well. PMPs are all up to date and the process is strongly supported by the HOM. Communications from the Personnel Officer are frequent and effective.

5.2.3 The Mission maintains an LES Committee in addition to having LES members on the Locally-Engaged Staff Management Consultative Board (LESMCB). There is a good representation of the different programs and position levels. The Inspection Team met with the LES Committee and the following issues were raised:

- lack of transparency with the Total Compensation Review process;
- worry that compensation packages would be reduced as is being done in the local public sector;
- possible revision of Terms and Conditions of Employment due to reforms in local law;
- concerns over possible position cuts as a result of budget cuts;
- the location of the new chancery; and,
- resolution of long outstanding classification requests.

Key Processes and Internal Controls

Key HR Processes and Internal Control Criteria	Meets	Needs Improvement	Does Not Meet
Staffing actions are conducted in-line with ALD guidelines. Written records supporting the process are maintained and contain required documents and approvals.	X		
Classification actions are conducted in-line with ALD guidelines. Written records supporting the process are maintained and contain required documents and approvals.	X		
Letters of Offer are signed by the appropriate authority.	X		
New LES and CBS employees are provided with an information package on the working conditions, benefits and regulations pertaining to employment at the mission.	X		
Staff are aware of the Values and Ethics Code and have signed a document certifying that they have read and understood this code. Mission management informs staff of the requirements of the Code on an annual basis.	X		
Mission signage is provided in both English and French and a bilingual Official Languages Co-ordinator has been appointed.	X		
The mission has sufficient capacity to communicate with and provide services to the public, both orally and in writing, in both official languages.	X		

5.2.4 Overall, HR processes and internal controls were in place and effective. There is good communication with the rest of the Common Services team regarding HR issues. The Personnel Officer makes use of documented checklists to guide clients and staff in their functions so all staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities, i.e. timing of PMP milestones, dates of increments, use of a security checklist for new employees, etc.

5.2.5 Files reviewed contained all required documentation. Competition files supported very well managed competitions, four of which were held recently. Newly hired staff complimented the process and the treatment received from the Mission upon hiring, stating that communication was excellent and the process was transparent.

5.2.6 A comprehensive welcome kit is provided to all new LES and CBS which includes a detailed “new employee checklist”. Thorough orientation briefings are also conducted by the Personnel Officer, the Military Police Security Specialists (MPSS) and the Foreign Service Information Technology Professional (FSITP).

5.2.7 During interviews with CBS and spouses, issues were raised regarding the Mission hardship level. As a non-hardship post, the expectation was that the standard of living in Athens would be comparable to other cities in Europe whereas ‘the hardship level was a shock’ was a phrase used frequently to describe their experience. Power outages, strikes, the language barrier and a lower than expected level of safety and services contribute to this opinion. Spousal employment and lack of flexibility regarding language training provided to spouses by the Department were also raised as issues.

5.3 Physical Resources

5.3.1 The Physical Resources functions at the Mission are the responsibility of the MCO, who is assisted by a Property and Materiel Manager (LE-07), a Materiel Clerk (LE-05) and a Maintenance Assistant (LE-00).

5.3.2 The Mission's property portfolio includes a Crown-owned Chancery and Official Residence (OR) and six Crown-leased staff quarters (SQ) which are a mix of houses located in the suburbs and apartments located downtown. There are four vehicles and an off-site warehouse.

5.3.3 The Chancery is located downtown in a five-storey building on an island site. Due to security and structural concerns with the building, the Chancery is on the Departmental priority list for relocation. The building does not meet current Canadian seismic standards, there is no setback from the road and there is only one fire exit, down a steep ladder only accessible from the roof. As a result, all major projects, renovation plans and new furniture for the Chancery have been postponed. Members of the Physical Resources Bureau (ARD) are working closely with the Mission to identify potential sites for the new chancery.

Program Management

Key Physical Resources Program Management Criteria	Meets	Needs Improvement	Does Not Meet
The MPMP and MMWP are up-to-date and approved by the appropriate mission and HQ authorities.	X		
The appropriate authority allocates SQs based on the recommendation of the Mission Housing Committee.	X		
The Chancery is well maintained and a maintenance schedule is in place.		X	
The Official Residence (OR) is well maintained and a maintenance schedule is in place.		X	
The mission has an efficient process in place for receiving, processing and monitoring work orders.		X	
Annual inspections are conducted to assess the state of the SQ and input into maintenance and acquisition planning.		X	
The mission's multi-year Capital Acquisition Plan is approved by CMM annually.			X
Local procurement guidelines have been established.		X	

5.3.4 Staff in the Section would benefit from having a discussion regarding accountabilities and responsibilities, which would guide decision making. This would include a review of spending limits, authorities and guidelines for the use of petty cash, cheques and acquisition cards. While local procurement guidelines are generally understood by the responsible staff members, there are no written guidelines in place. This limits the MCO's ability to hold staff accountable for delegated responsibilities and has led to inconsistency in the process applied and in the documents maintained on file. Developing a standard process document would provide staff with clearer guidelines and ensure greater transparency in the procurement process.

5.3.5 Work performed by the Section is largely reactive in nature and the development of a workplan would guide staff and enable the MCO to monitor work and perform a workload analysis. Service standards would also help staff to manage client expectation, as well as workloads.

5.3.6 After two years with no turnover, the summer of 2010 saw the relocation of four CBS and the leasing of three new SQs. Although new leases were more expensive than existing ones, the new SQs are of better quality. One existing lease was also renegotiated and a reduction was obtained. The commute for most CBS is close to one and a half hours each way and proximity to both public transportation and amenities were cited as challenges in identifying suitable SQs. Three SQs were visited as part of the Inspection. Two were of good quality, while the third was significantly smaller and has had substantial problems with *** the supply of electricity and the *** over the duration of the lease. ***.

5.3.7 While the Chancery is on a priority list for relocation, it is uncertain when this will take place. In consultation with HQ, it will be important that a short and medium-term plan for the Chancery be developed. Service contracts are in place for the Chancery and OR. However, a documented maintenance schedule for both locations would enable the Program to more effectively monitor work and proactively plan/schedule for future requirements.

5.3.8 The departmentally approved electronic work request system has been purchased by the Mission but not yet implemented. Currently, work requests are received by email or verbally, creating the risk that some requests may be missed or non actioned. Clients advised that this has happened in the past, which may have contributed to the perception that the Section is not client-service oriented. The Mission plans to roll out the system within the next few months and this will greatly assist monitoring, as well as providing a client feedback mechanism.

5.3.9 Both the HOM and MCO have visited all SQs, with regular maintenance visits made throughout the year. However, no annual inspection of SQs is performed. Annual inspections of properties would provide valuable information which could feed into the maintenance and capital acquisition plans.

5.3.10 Currently, there is no maintenance workplan, nor is there a multi-year capital acquisition plan. There is therefore a risk that maintenance projects or materiel acquisition needs could be overlooked or go unfunded. The Section should be proactive and consult PMs regarding their program needs and CBS regarding SQ needs in order to develop plans. The plans and associated budgets should then be presented at the CMM for discussion and approval.

Client Service

5.3.11 Client perceptions of the Property Section and client relations in general need to be improved. Some clients noted that the Section is sometimes too rigid in its adherence to policy and not focussed on finding solutions. There have been some instances where requests have not been actioned, which has led to the feeling that clients must fight to get services. The Section will have to work to change this negative perception. The implementation of an electronic service request system and development of standards and guidelines will help to better manage client expectations with improved communications.

Key Processes and Internal Controls

Key Physical Resources Internal Control Criteria	Meets	Needs Improvement	Does Not Meet
An inspection is conducted by new SQ occupants and a mission representative within 30 days of occupancy, after which occupancy agreements and distribution accounts are signed.		X	
A percentage of the costs for OR supplies has been established and regular reimbursements are made.	X		
Costs of damages to staff quarters or furnishings, beyond normal wear and tear, are recovered from the occupant.		X	
Records of assets located in the Chancery, OR and SQs, as well as those in storage, are maintained on an ongoing basis and verified annually. Assets are appropriately safeguarded and controlled.	X		
Disposals are appropriately authorized and follow Departmental guidelines.		X	
Vehicles logs are appropriately completed, demonstrating that use was for official purposes.	X		
Vehicle logs and mileage are verified monthly by a CBS to reconcile usage to gas purchases as well as monitor vehicle performance.	X		

5.3.12 The Officer responsible for SQs meets all new CBS upon their arrival at their SQ; however, a follow-up meeting should be scheduled shortly after their arrival to allow both parties to review SQ assets and sign the forms together, as well as discuss any work requirements. The SQ Checklist could also be provided to the occupant at this time for completion within three months. This would assist the Mission to identify any problems with the accommodation from the occupant's perspective.

5.3.13 In the past, there have been some cases where costs for damages to SQs or furnishings were not recovered. While the situation was more challenging during the period when there was no permanent MCO at the Mission, processes for staff to follow when damages are identified should be put in place and include contact with HQ when necessary.

5.3.14 All inventories are up to date and well documented with photographs of each item. Reference to the purchase year is also included. These are both considered good practices.

5.3.15 A temporary warehouse was leased in summer of 2010 to store items identified for disposal as new furniture was purchased for the new SQs. The disposal is planned for November 2010, after which the warehouse will no longer be needed. Files for previous disposals were reviewed and revealed that items which could not be sold were donated. No records were found on file to indicate which organization received the items. Previous disposal reports were approved by the MCO; however, this approval can only be granted by the HOM. In addition, some bids were received by email, which creates the potential for the process to be less transparent.

5.3.16 Vehicle maintenance is currently the responsibility of the driver assigned to each vehicle. Although a cost analysis for maintenance and fuel costs was conducted by the Property and Materiel Manager for all vehicles last year, it is unclear if maintenance is being monitored on an ongoing basis. The new vehicle purchased in June 2009 has not yet been taken for servicing and the driver plans to wait two years before doing so, which is contrary to the manufacturer's maintenance plan.

Recommendations to the Mission

5.3.17 Local procurement guidelines should be established.

5.3.18 A documented maintenance schedule for the Chancery and OR should be developed.

5.3.19 Annual inspections of SQs should be performed.

5.3.20 A multi-year capital acquisition plan should be developed and approved by the CMM.

5.3.21 The Property Section should schedule a meeting with newly arrived CBS within 30 days of occupancy.

5.3.22 A process to recover the costs of damages from occupants should be put in place.

5.3.23 Disposal sales should:

- **be approved by the HOM;**
- **have complete files with all supporting documentation including all information pertaining to donations; and,**
- **be conducted using sealed bids.**

5.3.24 Vehicle maintenance should be monitored to ensure the manufacturers maintenance plans are adhered to.

Mission Actions and Timeframes

5.3.17 In Progress for June 2011 - MCO, Property Manager & Material Clerk discussed this issue in detail in April 2011 and are working on developing local guidelines. Meanwhile, the Mission is continuing to make decisions based on financial logic, judgement and knowledge of the local markets/conditions. In addition, the Property and

Material Team is continuing to make local procurements based on the Material Management Manual's guidelines.

5.3.18 In Progress for June 2011 - The Property Manager had been using the Outlook Calendar to keep the maintenance schedule. The recommendation of having a separate document was actually suggested during the Inspection by the Property Manager who is working on it.

5.3.19 In Progress for September 2011 - Annual SQ Inspections had not been practice at this mission. The Property Team & MCO will establish this practice after the summer 2011 relocations.

5.3.20 In Progress for June 2011 - Due to lack of historical data (files, invoices etc) on the actual capital assets, it was difficult for the Mission to create a capital acquisition plan, given the Property Team didn't know when most of the assets had been acquired. A Capital Acquisition Plan is now being finalized.

5.3.21 Implemented Summer 2010 - This was already being implemented: In the summer of 2010, the Property Manager escorted each new CBS to their respective SQ on arrival and met with them at that time to go through the SQ, noting needs and any required follow up. All occupancy agreements were signed promptly and well within 30 days of occupancy. No new CBS arrived in 2008 and 2009.

5.3.22 In Progress for June 2011 - Annex D of Chapter of 4 of the Material Management Manual provides the Cost Recovery Instructions Policy, but Mission will develop a written process which will be communicated to CBS.

5.3.23 Implemented November 2010 - The last disposal sale of November 27, 2010 was conducted by sealed bids, was approved and signed by the HOM and all files were fully completed with supporting documents/pictures etc including donations of the unsold items. Charity organizations who received the items (at no cost to the mission) signed a receipt proving the donations. The 2008 disposal sale did not generate any revenues and the items were thrown out, since the mission would have incurred expenses to deliver the items to the charity organizations. The Material Clerk had written authorization from the former MCO to proceed. If disposal sales prior to 2008 were documented, the records were not kept * who no longer works at the mission.**

5.3.24 Implemented April 2011 - Although vehicle expenses/maintenance could be tracked in IMS, the drivers were not recording the maintenance of their vehicles. As of April, manual logs are now being kept in each vehicle. In addition, responsibility for monitoring vehicle maintenance has been transferred to the Personnel & General Services Officer, to whom the drivers report and who has scheduled regular inspections to ensure compliance.

5.4 Finance

5.4.1 The Finance Section is managed by the MCO, with day-to-day operations the responsibility of the LE-07 Accountant, assisted by an LE-05 Assistant Accountant.

5.4.2 There is the potential loss of capacity in the Section as both accountants may be on extended leave at the same time. The Assistant Accountant will soon be on *** leave and the Accountant could go on *** leave on very short notice. While the Mission has been active in searching for a replacement for the Assistant Accountant, the Mission could suddenly find itself with no experienced accountants. A back-up plan should be discussed with Headquarters and the Regional Services Centre.

Management

Key Finance Management Criteria	Meets	Needs Improvement	Does Not Meet
Financial procedures have been established to guide clients and Finance staff.		X	
The section employs methods to minimize disruption (eg. setting of "quiet hours" and controlling access to the finance section).	X		
The section has explored alternate methods to minimize transactions and reduce reliance on cash (i.e. acquisition cards, EFTs).	X		
Payment runs are kept to a minimum, but are sufficient enough to allow for good client service.	X		
Roles and responsibilities ensure adequate segregation of duties.	X		

5.4.3 Staff are experienced, conscientious and take their roles seriously. They have advised that they are facing heavier workloads, mostly due to the split of budgets and more reporting requirements from HQ.

5.4.4 Although Outlook is used for reminders, no formal workplan exists for the Section. The creation of a workplan detailing tasks to be performed, the responsible staff member and deadlines for completion, along with the development of Mission specific service standards, would help guide staff and clients and assist in the monitoring of work. The possibility that both Accountants could be on extended leave at the same time, makes this type of planning and documentation even more important.

5.4.5 While financial procedures are well understood by staff, they should be better documented and communicated to clients. Staff roles and responsibilities should also include more emphasis on the challenge function when reviewing documents received from other staff members, to ensure compliance with policies and procedures. Implementation of these two recommendations will strengthen an already well functioning Section.

Client Service

5.4.6 Overall, clients are satisfied with services received from the Section. New procedures are communicated using emails. However, there is no central repository containing up-to-date information.

Key Processes and Internal Controls

Key Finance Internal Control Criteria	Meets	Mostly Meets	Does Not Meet
A Contract Review Board (CRB) is in place and operating effectively with clear terms of reference.	X		
Contracting procedures have been documented and communicated to all staff involved in the contracting process.		X	
Contracting files demonstrate compliance with policies and procedures.		X	
Bank reconciliations are completed monthly and are properly reviewed and authorized by the appropriate authorities.	X		
The asset and liability report is reviewed on a monthly basis by the appropriate authority.	X		
Section 34 is exercised by individuals who possess the appropriate delegation of authority.	X		
Section 33 is exercised by individuals who possess the appropriate delegation of authority.	X		
The appropriate authority receives the original monthly bank statement directly from the bank and reviews it prior to giving it to the accountant.	X		
Official Receipts are provided to clients at the time of payment and to internal staff when funds are transferred (i.e. from Consular to Finance).	X		

Key Finance Internal Control Criteria	Meets	Mostly Meets	Does Not Meet
Reconciliations of any funds transferred within the mission are conducted in the presence of two staff.	X		
Monthly reconciliations of immigration fees are completed and the EXT-1203 is signed by the appropriate authority.	N/A	N/A	N/A
Travel and hospitality claim processes ensure that policies and guidelines are adhered to and that the accountant verifies the completeness and accuracy of the claim.	X		
A process is in place to ensure that, where applicable, CBS reimburse the mission for any services of personal nature received at their staff quarters (television, internet, telephone, etc.).	X		

5.4.7 In general, the contracting process is understood by the responsible staff members. Files reviewed were well documented for large contracts and demonstrated adherence to policies and procedures. It was noted though that contracts are not in place for security, gardening at the OR and cleaning services at the Chancery. Processes could be strengthened by ensuring bids are sent to the MCO, conducting follow-up with companies who do not bid and having the date of receipt stamped on envelopes by the guards.

5.4.8 As noted in observation 5.3.4 in the Physical Resources Section, documented guidelines would provide staff with more clarity and ensure consistency in processes followed, i.e. when different procurement methods should be used (sole sourcing, purchase orders or a competitive process), as well as what documentation should be kept on file. Contract Review Board thresholds for review should also be clearly communicated.

5.4.9 Canadian funds accepted for Consular services are deposited in the Euro bank account. While this is convenient, the exchange rate obtained is low. As a result, the revenue entries in the financial system are adjusted, making it difficult to accurately reconcile Consular revenues and services rendered.

5.4.10 While the Finance Section does ensure that Consular revenues received from Consular staff match the amount declared, they are not questioning reimbursements, as the transactions are authorized by the LE-07 Consular Officer. It is essential that Finance Section staff challenge these transactions and ensure that adequate justification is provided and supporting documents are attached.

Recommendations to the Mission

5.4.11 **The Mission should examine options that will ensure continuity of financial operations should both Accountants go on extended leave at the same time.**

5.4.12 **The Mission should develop a workplan for the Section and update services standards.**

5.4.13 **Financial procedures should be documented and communicated to clients.**

5.4.14 **Documented contracting processes should be established and**
- ❑ **bids should be sent to the MCO;**
- ❑ **follow-up with companies who do not bid should be performed;**
- ❑ **date of receipt of bids should be recorded; and,**
- ❑ **a review performed to ensure contracts are in place where necessary.**

5.4.15 **Limits for contract review by the CRB should be established and guidelines for use of different procurement methods should be implemented.**

5.4.16 **Canadian funds received should be sent to Headquarters.**

5.4.17 **Finance staff should ensure that, in all cases, adequate justification is provided and all supporting documents are attached when processing transactions.**

5.4.18 **Only CBS should be authorizing the reimbursement of fees.**

Mission Actions and Timeframes

5.4.11 **In Progress for Fall 2011 - A temporary Assistant Accountant was hired in early December to replace the Assistant Accountant who was departing on leave and to allow 1 month handover. The accountant and the temp accountant assistant started writing a handover document in December 2010 detailing transaction procedures, etc specific to ATHNS, but the main Accountant suddenly left in early January on leave. Due to lack of resources in the region, neither the RSC nor other missions could assist with temporary help. Mission was however able to secure a Temporary**

Duty from SMFF in February, allowing the mission some flexibility in hiring a second Accountant.

All accountant resources (now 2 temporary employees with no previous embassy experience) are concentrating on maintaining daily procedures. The handover document was therefore overtaken by sudden developments. It will not be possible to complete it until after the return of the Accountant in fall 2011.

5.4.12 In Progress for June 2011 - Upon arrival at the mission in August 2010, the MCO identified that a workplan was required for the Program. The MCO is currently making good progress on completing it.

Work is well underway on updating service standards. This is a major undertaking as services standards had not been updated since 2005. The process requires critical input from staff in each of administrative sections. For this reason, the document can only be completed over the fall after the return of the mission's accountant from maternity leave.

5.4.13 Implemented November 2011 - Following the Inspection's debrief, the MCO and the accounting section reviewed financial procedures and ensured these were documented and communicated to the clients.

5.4.14 Implemented March 2011 - Since the MCO's arrival at post, all contracting policies and bidding procedures have been followed to the letter. As of March 2011, all contracts are in place for services the Mission is expecting to receive for FY 2011-12.

5.4.15 Implemented October 2010 - The Terms of Reference were created by the MCO in October 2010 and they clearly state that the CRB will review mission contracts in excess of 10,000 CAD. Since that time, guidelines are being consistently implemented.

5.4.16 In Progress for May 2011 - Following the Inspection Team's debrief, SMFF was approached in December 2010. At that time, the Mission was advised to wait until the written recommendations were issued by ZIV before taking any action. Mission will now be following up again with SMFF.

5.4.17 Implemented November 2010 - Issue was reviewed by MCO and Finance Staff to ensure that all justifications/supporting documents are now continuously provided when processing transactions.

5.4.18 **Implemented June 2011 - Every reimbursement was discussed with the MCO prior to the LE-07 sending the email to the accoutants, on which the MCO was copied. Effective immediately, the email will now be sent directly to the MCO to which she will reply authorizing the accountants to proceed with the refund.**

5.5 Information Management / Information Technology (IM-IT)

5.5.1 The IM-IT Section is managed by a CS-03 Foreign Service Information Technology Professional (FSITP). The Section provides services to approximately 31 clients at the Mission and is also responsible for the missions in Istanbul and Ankara, which are visited approximately every six months.

Management

Key IM-IT Management Criteria	Meets	Needs Improvement	Does Not Meet
An Information Management / Information Technology (IM-IT) workplan exists and includes regional activities.		X	
The CMM or an IM-IT Committee provides direction and oversight for the IM-IT function.	X		
The liaison between the mission, HQ and regional manager is effective.	X		
IM-IT requirements in relation to business continuity planning (BCP) have been defined, implemented and tested.		X	

5.5.2 The FSITP *** and understands well the work to be performed by the Section. IT support requests are coordinated through Remedy, with much of the work largely reactive in nature. However, to assist with planning major projects or improvement initiatives and guide the work of the FSITP, an IM-IT workplan should be developed. It would also enable the MCO to monitor work and perform a workload analysis.

5.5.3 Although a formal IM-IT Committee is not in place, communications with Mission staff are very good. The MCO is involved in the function and is consulted about all program requirements. The FSITP attends the bi-weekly meeting with all Common Services staff. The FSITP also provides input into the Mission's budget planning process and assesses IT hardware and software requirements. The small size of the Mission allows for frequent communications with clients on any requirements.

5.5.4 The Mission is in the process of developing a Business Continuity Plan and has designated *** as the alternate command post (ACP). Some IT equipment is already on site and additional passport equipment will also be set up there. Once the set-up is completed, it will be important to test equipment regularly as part of the plan.

Client Service

Key IM-IT Client Service Criteria	Meets	Needs Improvement	Does Not Meet
Problems experienced by the user are generally resolved within a reasonable time frame.	X		
The Mission is using the required help-desk/client service tools and maintains relevant data.	X		

5.5.5 Although the Section is providing a good level of service to clients, service standards, which would help guide staff and clients and manage client expectations, are not in place. Once standards have been developed and approved, the Mission should ensure that clients are advised accordingly. In line with Departmental standards, the use of the help line should be encouraged to ensure consistency of service delivery in missions around the world.

Key Processes and Internal Controls

Key IM-IT Internal Control Criteria	Meets	Needs Improvement	Does Not Meet
Back-ups are performed routinely and tapes are stored in a secure location away from the primary use area.	X		
The mission has appropriate secondary communications in place and those tools are tested regularly.	X		
Standardized practices and processes are in place to facilitate management and sharing of corporate information across programs. (e.g. e-mail best practices, effective folder structures).	X		
Controls are in place to ensure the network acceptable use policy (NAUP) is respected (SIGNET and digital subscriber line (DSL) connections).	X		
Employees formally sign out IT assets (mobility tools) and are advised of their accountabilities.		X	
Surplus IT assets are disposed with the appropriate approvals per departmental policy.	X		

5.5.6 Overall, IM-IT processes and controls were effective. Reminders are sent to staff regarding network acceptable use, and as a good practice the FSITP is planning to make a presentation at the next town-hall meeting on this subject. There had been some sharing of passwords in the past, but the issue was discussed with staff and it has not occurred recently.

5.5.7 An inventory of IT assets is maintained through the use of ITAMS and the FSITP reviews and updates the inventory on a regular basis. However, a sign-out register is not being used for equipment such as laptop computers provided to staff on loan. Disposal of surplus equipment is conducted by the Common Services Section.

Recommendations to the Mission

5.5.9 A workplan and service standards for the Section should be developed and shared with clients.

5.5.10 IT assets should be formally signed out by users and accountabilities communicated.

Mission Actions and Timeframes

5.5.9 In Progress for June 2011 - MCO & FSITP discussed this recommendation in April 2011. A workplan and service standards are now being developed and will be shared with clients.

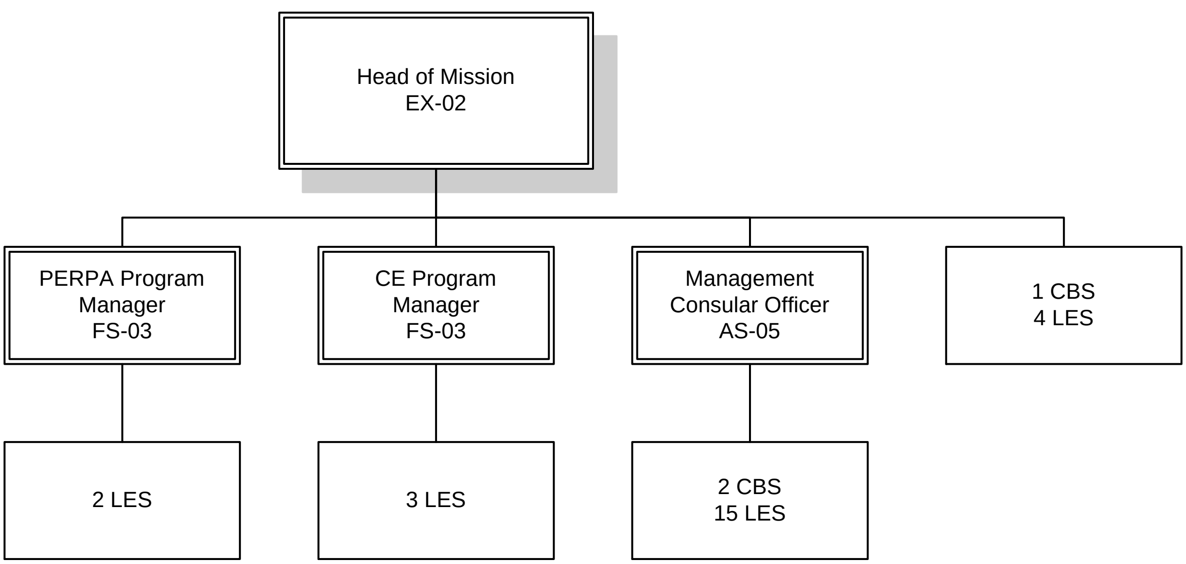
5.5.10 Implemented April 2011 - The FSITP created a sign out/custodian form for all IT equipment on loan to LES & CBS. Staff were informed of this change and the forms are currently being used.

Appendix A: Mission Resources Fact Sheet

Physical Resources		
Assets	**Crown Owned**	**Crown Leased**
Chancery	1	-
Official Residence	1	-
Staff Quarters	-	6
Vehicles	4	-

2009-2010 Budgets	Program Budget	Common Services Budget
Operating (N001)	$ 228,115	$ 1,204,055
Capital (N005)	-	81,105
CBS Salaries (N011)	-	-
LES Salaries (N012)	897,524	509,851
Total	**$ 1,125,639**	**$ 1,795,011**

Appendix B: Organization Chart



Appendix C: Frequently Used Acronyms

BCP	Business Continuity Plan
CBS	Canada-based Staff
CMM	Committee on Mission Management
COMIP	Consular Management Information Program
CONPLAN	Contingency Plan
CRB	Contract Review Board
CSF	Client Service Fund
EFT	Electronic Funds Transfer
DMCO	Deputy Management Consular Officer
FSITP	Foreign Service Information Technology Professional
FTE	Full Time Equivalent Position
FY	Fiscal Year
GCS	Global Commerce Strategy
GVC	Global Value Chains
HOM	Head of Mission
HONCON	Honorary Consul
HQ	Headquarters
HR	Human Resources
HSZ	High Security Zone
IBD	International Business Development
ICT	Information Communication Technologies
IM-IT	Information Management - Information Technology
IMS	Integrated Management System
LEITP	Locally-engaged Information Technology Professional
LES	Locally-engaged Staff
LESMCB	LES Management Consultation Board
MCO	Management Consular Officer
MFO	Mission Financial Officer
MM Module	Materiel Management Module

MMWP	Mission Maintenance Work Plan
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSO	Mission Security Officer
MPMP	Mission Property Management Plan
NAAP	North American Platform Program
OR	Official Residence
OZ	Operations Zone
PERPA	Political Economic Relations and Public Affairs
PIF	Post Initiative Fund
PM	Program Manager
PMA	Performance Management Agreement
PMP	Human Resources - Performance Management Program
PMP	Consular - Passport Management Program
PRIME	Physical Resources Information - Mission Environment
ROCA	Registration of Canadians Abroad
S&T	Science and Technology
STC	Senior Trade Commissioner
SQ	Staff Quarter
SZ	Security Zone
TC	Trade Commissioner
TCA	Trade Commissioner Assistant
TCS	Trade Commissioner Service
TRIO	The TCS' Client Relationship Management System
ZID	Office of the Inspector General
ZIV	Inspection Division