

**AUDIT  
OF  
THE CANADIAN EMBASSY**

**TUNIS**

**APRIL 2002**

**Audit Division ( SIV )**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	1
MISSION MANAGEMENT .....	3
1.1 Overview .....	3
GENERAL RELATIONS PROGRAM .....	4
2.1 Management of the Program .....	4
INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM .....	7
3.1 Management of the Program .....	7
3.2 IBD Program Planning .....	7
3.3 Training .....	8
3.4 Services .....	9
3.5 Program Delivery Infrastructure .....	10
CONSULAR PROGRAM .....	11
4.1 Management of the Program .....	11
ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM .....	13
5.1 Management of the Program .....	13
5.2 Human Resources Management .....	14
5.3 Physical Resources .....	17
5.4 Financial Management .....	20
5.5 Information Management .....	24
APPENDIX A .....	26
MISSION RESOURCES FACT SHEET .....	26

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

An audit of the International Business Development (IBD), General Relations, Consular and Administration Programs was conducted in Tunis from October 23 to 27, 2000. A previous audit was conducted in September 1994. The office in Tripoli, which reports to the Head of Mission (HOM) in Tunis, was not visited as part of this audit.

### **MANAGEMENT OF THE MISSION**

This is a well-managed Mission led by an experienced HOM. There is good communication within the Mission, and the regular meetings of the Committee on Mission Management (CMM) afford the opportunity for Program Managers to share information. At the time of the audit, the Mission was facing a number of questions regarding possible expansion or contraction of the Immigration and Development Programs, respectively. The Quebec Immigration Service had indicated a desire to co-locate an office in Tunis. Additionally, there were plans to expand the Trade Office in Tripoli, Libya. Since the audit visit, a Canada-based (CBS) FS-02 Officer has been posted to Libya, and an Embassy has been opened. All of the above issues will have an immediate and ongoing effect on both the role and size of the Mission. The establishment of a Locally-engaged Staff (LES) Committee is encouraged, and an annual Mission retreat would improve cohesion amongst the various Programs, as well as morale.

### **GENERAL RELATIONS PROGRAM**

At the time of the audit, the General Relations Program had just completed its work on the second largest delegation visit in six months. The Program was also preoccupied with the planned expansion of Canada's presence in Libya. Despite this workload, the Program's planning process was well underway. Recommendations have been made to improve this process.

### **INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT (IBD) PROGRAM**

The IBD Program is a small one that focusses on niche markets and there is little potential for significant trade expansion. With the placement of the CBS Officer in Tripoli, the support role the IBD Program has played there is expected to change. Recommendations have been made to improve the planning process.

## **CONSULAR PROGRAM**

The Consular Program is well managed. The Program also supports the LES Consular Assistant at the office in Tripoli by exercising signing authority and retaining responsibility for passport issuance.

## **ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM**

The Administration Program is well managed and significant improvements have been made in a short time since the new Management and Consular Officer (MCO) arrived at the Mission. The current Chancery configuration needs to be reviewed to ensure the best possible accommodation of current and future programs. The Mission will need to implement a number of basic internal controls that have been missing for some time, and to challenge certain staff privileges and payments that have been implemented. Communications would be improved with a hub and spoke agreement between the Mission and Tripoli.

## MISSION MANAGEMENT

### 1.1 Overview

1.1.1 Tunis is a well-managed Mission that is facing many questions associated with the possible expansion or contraction of its various programs. The Mission has dedicated much time to visiting trade delegations and to the establishment of a new office in Tripoli.

1.1.2 The arrival of the new MCO has led to a marked improvement in Mission administration and overall morale. Well supported by the HOM, the MCO has brought an open style and a focus on service to the Mission, and clients now feel well served.

1.1.3 The Mission will need to implement some basic internal controls that have been missing over the past few years. Certain staff privileges and payments allowed over time need to be challenged and curtailed. This unpopular but necessary task will require support and leadership from the CMM and the HOM.

1.1.4 Communications within the Mission are good, with regular weekly meetings of the CMM, offering opportunities to share information. An annual Mission retreat would help improve cohesion between Programs, and would also improve staff morale.

## **GENERAL RELATIONS PROGRAM**

### **2.1 Management of the Program**

2.1.1 The General Relations (GR) Program is managed by an experienced FS-02, supported by a Secretary (LE-06) and a Translation/Public Affairs Assistant (LE-05). At the time of the audit, the Mission had just finished managing a visit from a large Quebec Trade Delegation, its second largest delegation in six months.

2.1.2 The Mission has been preoccupied by the revival and expansion of diplomatic relations with Libya and the opening of a Trade Office in Tripoli. More recently, that office was relocated and a Chargé d’Affaires was named to Tripoli. This is an FS-02 position located in a Canadian Embassy.

### **Program Planning**

2.1.3 No handover log, plans or other documentation, aside from a diary, were left for the Program Manager by his predecessor. Although the existence of a handover log would have been beneficial, the Program Manager has quickly taken charge of the portfolio and planning is well underway. Already in place are a calendar of events and a set of objectives, with associated costed projects and activities for political and public affairs, including allocation of the Post Initiative Fund (PIF). These fit in well with the objectives for the GR Program expressed in the HOM’s Accountability Accord and in the Geographic Bureau Business Plan.

2.1.4 The planning process may now be further refined after full discussion with the HOM, peer program managers and staff who will contribute to its implementation and completion, with a set of key result indicators and success criteria. This will enable the HOM and the Program Manager to then develop an Accountability Agreement. The GR Program involvement with the new position in Libya will also have to be reflected in the plan, along with expected costs (e.g., travel, hospitality and possibly PIF initiatives).

2.1.5 The PIF is limited (\$15,000) and every opportunity is being taken to leverage it by linking it with cultural and other events that are occurring in the region, as well as inviting the private sector and other donors to contribute to the cost of staging events. Finding opportunities for joint action with other missions in the area would be another way to leverage the fund. To this end, a periodic meeting of Political and/or Public Affairs Program Managers or Officers to discuss possible joint action would be beneficial.

## **Recommendations for the Mission**

- 2.1.6** The HOM should ensure that a Handover Log (see Horizons Intranet site - Post Support Tools: Best Practices) is prepared by departing Program Managers.
- 2.1.7** The Program's plan should be developed with the HOM, peer Program Managers and staff, and should outline responsibilities that enter into the accountability framework and the appraisal process.

## **Mission Responses**

- 2.1.6** Recommendation accepted. It will be implemented automatically when the next departures from the Mission take place.
- 2.1.7** The Program's plan was accepted by the HOM and discussed with him again mid-term as part of the process aimed at attaining the Mission's overall objectives.

## **Program Organization**

- 2.1.8** The job description of the Translator/Public Affairs Assistant does not reflect the current range of duties or the expanded role envisaged by the Program Manager. In particular, the Program Manager intends to have the Public Affairs Assistant proactively promote Canada to Tunisian and Libyan decision-makers, through the use of literature produced in Canada, the organization/sponsorship of Canadian cultural events in Tunisia and Libya, and the organization of Information Days on Canada. The Assistant will also be providing Canadians with a better understanding of Tunisia through regular reporting and analysis of Arab-language media coverage.
- 2.1.9** The Public Affairs Assistant has had limited exposure to Canada and has visited Canada only once, in 1995. Given her expanded role, further exposure to Canada would be beneficial.

## **Recommendations for the Mission**

- 2.1.10** Update the Translator/Public Affairs Assistant job description to reflect the current and future expanded role.
- 2.1.11** Seek an opportunity to give the Translator/Public Affairs Assistant more exposure to Canada.

## **Mission Responses**

- 2.1.10**        **The job description and position level of the Translator/Public Affairs Assistant were revised and the new description and level became effective August 1, 2001.**
- 2.1.11**        **The Assistant visited Canada in September 2001 for three weeks in order to familiarize himself with Canada as well as the Program's objectives.**

## **Program Policies and Procedures**

2.1.12        The GR Program does not benefit from systemic support from its Geographic and functional leaders of the type provided to the IBD Program. There is a lack of clear delineation of services to be provided to its various clients, and a lack of systems, procedures and databases, work tools and support units. The GR Program could achieve much more with its limited resources if it had such support. In the absence of a "New Approach" similar to that developed by the Trade Commissioner Service, the Geographic Bureau should attempt to systematically provide more support for the GR Program. We have raised this issue at Headquarters (HQ) through both Mission audits and HQ work.

2.1.13        The PIF instructions found at the Mission are outdated and in need of revision to ensure they reflect current circumstances. This has been raised in other audit reports.



## **INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

### **3.1 Management of the Program**

3.1.1 The International Business Development (IBD) Program is managed by an experienced Program Manager (FS-02), ably supported by a Commercial Officer (LE-09) and a Secretary (LE-05). Until recently, the Program Manager was also responsible for the IBD Program in Libya and provided guidance to a Consular Officer (LE-07) in Tripoli, who had some Trade involvement. Even with the addition of the FS-02 position in Tripoli, the Mission continues to provide support.

3.1.2 The IBD Program in Tunisia is limited in scope and will never be large. In the past five years, exports to Tunisia have varied between \$30 and \$100 million, with no definite trend established. Tunisia's focus will continue to be on Europe, but there will be niche market opportunities for Canada. Libya offers more potential, although its commerce is inextricably linked to political considerations. A niche where Canadian companies have had success in the past, in both countries, and where there continues to be good potential, is investment in resources, particularly the oil sector. Once established, the trade niche for Canadian companies has tended to expand into adjacent service areas.

3.1.3 There is good cooperation with the Development Program with which a number of trade opportunities originate, and duties are shared with the Development Program Manager due to many mutual objectives. With the Development Program in Tunisia diminishing, the number of trade opportunities from this source can be expected to decrease over time.

### **3.2 IBD Program Planning**

3.2.1 There is no formal Business Plan. However, the appraisals of the Program Manager and Commercial Officer show clear objectives. The team meets often and team members are aware of their respective objectives, priorities and activities to be undertaken. The Commercial Officer has his own set of objectives, within the framework of the overall Program objectives. Since the IBD team is not large enough to have portfolios assigned to different members, all team members work on the whole range of sectors. The planning process could be improved through more explicit documentation of objectives, activities and projects that would be prioritized and costed, with results indicators and associated success criteria. This would facilitate discussion of the IBD Program with the HOM, peers and staff in regard to roles and responsibilities and performance assessment.

3.2.2 Costed PIBD projects totalling \$26,000 were submitted to the Geographic Bureau, but only \$9,000 was made available.

## **Recommendation for the Mission**

- 3.2.3** The IBD plans should be made more explicit and should define key results indicators and associated success criteria, to facilitate assessment of program performance.

## **Mission Response**

- 3.2.3** The IBD Program has introduced a whole range of strategic management tools that enable better planning as well as monitoring, and the efficiency of these tools is starting to be noticed by private sector clients and Headquarters. The New Approach philosophy has guided this corrective action and the application of work methods aimed at ensuring more effective measurement of results and the making of adjustments as needed. These changes have allowed the delay noted by Audit to be made up, while maintaining the flexibility needed for the iterative process inherent in business opportunity development. Priority sectors are now clearer and Ottawa has approved the schedule and budgets for priority sectoral studies. Detailed schedules of main events are published and circulated both within the Mission and to Headquarters, in an effort to achieve synergy. Training plans for local staff are executed. The implementation schedule for the New Approach mechanisms is in place: correspondence register; meeting of deadlines; form letters; dissemination of information on priority and optional services; WIN reports; reports on the routine use of the PIBD; regular team meetings; monthly updates; etc.

## **3.3 Training**

- 3.3.1** Tunis was one of the last Missions to receive WIN On-line. As a consequence, the training provided was long forgotten by the time the Mission was in a position to apply it. The Program Manager has initiated action to have training provided for the whole team while in Paris. It is imperative that those intentions be carried out, as currently no contacts are being input into the system.

## **Recommendation for the Mission**

- 3.3.2** Ensure that WIN On-line is used.

## **Mission Response**

- 3.3.2** Follow-up WIN training is underway and considerable effort has been made to input WIN data. This is now done systematically. Since

**August 2001, 220 WIN entries have been made. These entries are detailed enough to derive strategically important information, such as: a) 70% of services provided are so-called basic services, showing that our efforts have shifted towards value-added activities while retaining a margin of flexibility appreciated by our clients who need more support; b) 65% of our clients are from Quebec; c) confirmed identification of our priority sectors; d) identification of the profile of our typical clients, i.e. numerous and quite diverse clients, with slight concentrations of SMEs in the IT, agri-food and service sectors.**

### **3.4 Services**

#### **The New Approach**

3.4.1 The “New Approach” is being implemented in a common sense way, as provided for in the guidelines. Many Canadian businesses are reluctant to venture into unfamiliar territory such as Tunisia and Libya, which are still seen to be difficult in commercial terms. Since the full range of alternative sources of services for visiting businesses is not always available, there is a certain amount of leeway in the services provided by the Mission. In particular, where there is an opportunity to pursue sectoral objectives, as part of a specific initiative by one or more businesses, the Mission is more willing to provide services that would not otherwise be provided. Troubleshooting tends to occupy a substantial portion of the Program’s time.

3.4.2 The Mission takes every opportunity to inform Canadian businesses of the nature and implications of the New Approach and maintains a database of available contacts and sources of alternative services for both Tunisia and Libya. The Mission is also re-directing its activities to concentrate on outreach and advocacy, providing market prospects and intelligence, and related proactive activities. Outreach activity would be greatly facilitated by sector information kits on Canadian companies active in the respective sectors.

3.4.3 The Mission provided only four contacts for purposes of performing client surveys. This is attributed to the Mission’s inability to use the WIN On-line system, as described above. Although the lack of training on WIN On-line is a disadvantage, there are other means of recording and communicating contact information.

### **3.5 Program Delivery Infrastructure**

3.5.1 The IBD Program finds the Strategis and Horizons Web sites very useful. The International Business Opportunities Centre (IBOC), although used, is seen as having a marginal effect on the IBD Program in Tunisia owing to the fact that Canadian companies are not ready to seriously commit to the North Africa market area.

Association Web sites are often more useful than the WIN source. Local and Canadian company Web sites are good sources of information, but time-consuming to search, particularly the Canadian company Web sites, due to their number.

3.5.2 There are some technological gaps at the Mission which should be overcome in order to improve the efficiency of the Program. Providing access to fax receiving facilities outside of the secure area, equipping the Commercial Officer with a cellular telephone and ensuring better access to Mission vehicles are some examples. At the moment, LES IBD staff cannot retrieve urgent facsimiles without the help of a CBS. Also, given the small size of the IBD team, it would be advantageous to have the ability to stay in constant touch by cellular phone. Currently, cellular phones are not provided to LES.

#### **Recommendation for the Mission**

**3.5.3 Consider providing access to fax facilities outside the secure area and cellular phones to LES where it would enhance the efficiency of the IBD team.**

#### **Mission Response**

**3.5.3 There is a fax machine near the International Business Development section. The LES (Assit 09) has had a cellular phone since October 2001, and a laptop computer will be provided to the LES by TCS very shortly for use outside the Mission, with the possibility of access to SIGNET.**

## **CONSULAR PROGRAM**

### **4.1 Management of the Program**

4.1.1 The Consular Program is well managed by the MCO with the help of an experienced Consular Assistant (LE-08), who has worked at the Mission for over nine years. The DMCO (CR-06) is also involved in the management of the Consular Program, but more in a back-up capacity. The Audit Team did not visit the office in Tripoli. There are no Honorary Consuls in Tunisia or Libya.

4.1.2 The volume of work is constant throughout the year, with an average of 20 passports issued every month. Program delivery is effective. The Consular Assistant is making full use of COSMOS and works closely with the MCO on Consular cases as required. Her workload is 75 percent Consular duties, with the balance taken up by other administrative tasks. The SA and the General Relations Secretary provide back-up for the Consular Assistant during absences.

4.1.3 The Mission has fully implemented Consular service standards and emergency service requests are appropriately addressed. A new Consular interview booth was constructed in the fall of 1999. This booth meets the service needs of the clients and has greatly facilitated the delivery of services by the Consular Assistant.

### **4.2 Service to Canadians**

4.2.1 Consular cases are handled by the Consular Assistant under the general direction of the MCO. Services are offered in both official languages and the local language if necessary.

4.2.2 The Mission Consular Contingency Plan was updated in October 2000. There are 550 Canadians registered in Tunisia. As the country is relatively small and safe, there is no warden system in place. It is estimated that there are approximately 3,000 Canadians living in Libya, mostly working in the oil business. Most are registered with the office there. There were no Canadians in prison in either country at the time of audit.

### **4.3 Passport and Citizenship Services**

4.3.1 Blank passports are kept in the secure area. An accounting of these passports was carried out and security procedures to maintain these documents were found to be adequate. \*\*\*

## **Recommendation for the Mission**

**4.3.2           \*\*\***

## **Mission Response**

**4.3.2           The Mission has already instituted this practice.**

## **ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM**

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

5.1.1 The Administration Program is well managed and provides effective services to the Mission. The MCO arrived in 2000 and is well supported by the HOM, who has much confidence in her abilities. She is very organized and has an open door policy. The Program would benefit from weekly staff meetings which would serve to share information and increase communication, set priorities, and review accomplishments from the previous period.

5.1.2 The Administration Program does not have service standards. These would ensure clients know what to expect in terms of quality and response time for services, and would also protect Administration from unreasonable requests. These should be discussed and approved by the CMM. Some minor criticism was directed at the Property Section for delays in responding to certain requests and for occasional lack of communication or feedback. Overall, clients interviewed felt Administration was serving them well.

### **Recommendations for the Mission**

**5.1.3 Ensure weekly Administration Section meetings take place.**

**5.1.4 Develop service standards for the Administration Program with regard to quality of service and time frames for service delivery.**

### **Mission Responses**

**5.1.3 In addition to weekly meetings, the Administration Section meets automatically when there is an urgent problem to solve.**

**5.1.4 In order to provide more transparent and better organized service, it was necessary to reorganize and establish an improved structure after the position of the Canadian Property and Materiel Assistant was transferred to Tripoli. Service standards are being developed.**

### **Hub and Spoke Agreement**

5.1.5 In the year 2000, the Mission faced many challenges related to the opening of a spoke Mission in Tripoli. More recently, this Mission became a Consulate with the addition of an FS position, and new offices were located and leased. The Consulate also has three LES members and thus requires the support of the hub Mission for many services. A hub and spoke agreement is necessary to clarify the roles

of each office, especially as regards Administration support. The DMCO has travelled frequently between the two offices. Depending upon on-going requirements, some consideration should be given to transferring the DMCO position from Tunis to Tripoli on a permanent basis. This could be justified given the complexity of the operating environment at the spoke, the relatively high volume of administrative work there, and the stable and possibly declining workload at the hub Mission.

5.1.6 At the time of the audit, no fund centre number had been assigned for Tripoli. Expenditures related to Tripoli were consequently not being tracked and reported upon separately. Since the audit, a fund centre for the spoke Mission has been created, and all expenditures have been appropriately tracked. Additionally, various exchange rates are used in Libya: the two most common to the Mission operations are the official rate and the commercial or tourist rate. The Mission was working closely with SMF to resolve these issues.

## **5.2 Human Resources Management**

5.2.1 The MCO manages the HR function and is currently devoting about 40 percent of her time to this area. LES morale has improved since her arrival. Regularising long-term contract employees, staffing actions and a number of classification actions are priorities for the MCO in the coming months. Recent salary increases were well received by the LES. The HOM has been very supportive of the MCO on all matters dealing with HR management.

### **Staffing and Classification**

5.2.2 Issues arose concerning a perceived lack of communication and transparency in the staffing of vacant positions. Staffing boards are held for all competitions, with MCO participation in the selection process. File review indicated that selection criteria and a point rating system existed for position competitions. In one instance, not all staff were aware of a competition taking place (for the Systems Administrator position), and some LES members thought the selection process was predetermined. According to the RSM, the successful candidate was the most qualified.

### **Recommendation for the Mission**

**5.2.3 Ensure all internal competitions are open and accessible to all Mission staff.**

### **Mission Response**

**5.2.3 Since the arrival of the new MCO, all internal and external competitions have been open to all Mission staff.**



5.2.4 A number of reclassifications had taken place over the previous year, based on revised job descriptions. The decisions made were not subject to Classification Committee review, but were simply presented to the CMM for approval.

### **Recommendation for the Mission**

**5.2.5 Form a Classification Committee to review and conclude classification actions, for recommendation to the CMM.**

### **Mission Response**

**5.2.5 A Classification Committee has been set up and is consulted about all classification requests.**

### **Overtime and Leave**

5.2.6 Most of the overtime is claimed by the Drivers, with other staff working overtime on an exceptional basis only. Some LES had not used all their annual leave entitlements in previous years and two were carrying forward high balances. If the budget permits, excess leave and overtime is cashed out at year end. LES leave and attendance records are kept by the Consular Assistant, and a detailed electronic spreadsheet tracks leave balances for each employee.

### **Training**

5.2.7 The Mission has no training plan, although training has been provided for many staff members in the areas of Information Technology, Consular, and Accounting. Such a plan would document the training provided to date, allow needs and costs to be clearly identified, and permit economies to be made when a number of LES members have a requirement for the same type of training. Training can also be linked to the appraisal process.

### **LES Issues**

5.2.8 Mission Management had ceased meeting with the LES committee over the past few years. The Audit Team met with a single LES representative, who had been nominated to speak on behalf of the entire LES community. The primary issue of concern was the lack of clear communications within the Mission. Another issue was a perceived lack of transparency in the staffing process, and the third related to improvements to the benefits package. There was also a perception that Canadian LES were treated differently from the other LES.

## **Recommendations for the Mission**

- 5.2.9 Continue efforts to reduce overtime and annual leave carry-forward.**
- 5.2.10 Develop a training plan for the Mission.**
- 5.2.11 Form an LES Committee to meet regularly with Mission Management.**

## **Mission Responses**

- 5.2.9 Considerable and sustained efforts are being made to reduce LES overtime. Since the arrival of the new MCO, employees have been strongly encouraged to use their leave, and annual leave has only been paid or carried forward on an exceptional basis.**
- 5.2.10 When the Mission receives the CFSI training catalogue, each Program Head looks it over and can suggest courses to his or her staff. The Mission has no training plan per se; training is provided on a case-by-case basis and according to program needs.**
- 5.2.11 An LES Committee has been formed and is operating very well. Meetings with Management are held as needed. A Committee member participates in the Management Committee meeting the first week of every month.**

## **Meal Allowances**

- 5.2.12 Some unusual privileges not observed in any other Canadian Missions have been granted to CBS and LES at the Mission. For example, the Mission has been providing meal allowances for CBS and LES Drivers when they work through the lunch hour. Drivers often work through the lunch hour but are not on travel status and therefore are not entitled to meal allowances. The rate used to reimburse employees has been the travel status meal rate, equivalent at the time of the audit to \$15. Originally the rate allowed was equivalent to the OR staff meal rate (\$3), but was changed to the higher rate during the tenure of the previous MCO. This amount is paid out of the petty cash fund.**
- 5.2.13 Providing payment for meals for LES during normal working hours is not consistent with the LES Handbook and needs to be eliminated. Providing payment for meals to CBS should be as per the Collective Agreements. A provision for payment of meals to LES during overtime hours, if warranted, should be included in the LES Handbook. An amendment could be made based on a survey to gauge the policies and practices of marker employers on this subject, as well as to ascertain an appropriate rate.**

## **Recommendations for the Mission**

- 5.2.14 Cease paying meal allowances to staff who are not on official travel status. If warranted, amend the LES Handbook to cover meals during overtime.**
- 5.2.15 Only provide meal allowances to CBS as per the Collective Agreements.**

## **Mission Responses**

- 5.2.14 The practice of paying meal allowances to staff not on travel status has completely stopped. An entry to this effect has been added to the LES Handbook, which is being finalized.**
- 5.2.15 The practice of only providing meal allowances to CBS as per Collective Agreements has been instituted.**

## **5.3 Physical Resources**

5.3.1 The DMCO manages the day-to-day operations of the Property Function. The DMCO is assisted by an LES Property/Materiel Clerk (LE-04), a Handyman who does general maintenance, and a Driver/Customs Clerk. In general, this Function is well run, and resources were deemed to be sufficient.

### **Chancery**

5.3.2 The Chancery lease was renewed in 1999 for nine years. The building, a converted apartment building, is not without problems but, overall, is functional. \*\*\* The Immigration Section is crowded, but some relief could be found by eliminating the library (no longer supported by DFAIT) and moving the Mission nurse to an office on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor. The general utilization of space in the Chancery could be improved through some re-arranging. An analysis is needed to explore options in terms of more efficient use of space for current and future needs.

5.3.3 The Quebec Immigration Service (QIS) conducts liaison visits quite frequently, up to 30 weeks in total in 1999. Accommodating this service is difficult given the current configuration of Chancery offices. The Mission is experiencing some incremental costs associated with these visits. If these costs were tracked, an attempt at cost recovery could be made to HQ. From a space perspective, the QIS officers could be accommodated for temporary duty or even on a permanent basis with some reconfiguration of the fourth and fifth floors. The space currently occupied by the night-watchman, which is at street level, could also be reclaimed. This would provide separate and easy access for QIS clients, and enable appropriate security features to

be built. The upper floors offer a good amount of usable space because there is a kitchen on each floor, and there are also two balconies that could be closed in and converted to office space if needed.

### **Recommendation for SRD**

#### **5.3.4 Explore options to make more efficient use of Chancery space.**

### **SRD Response**

#### **5.3.4 SRSK met with ISRA to discuss both improvements to the Mission's security system and renovations to the Chancery to make more efficient use of space.**

### **Official Residence (OR)**

5.3.5 The Official Residence is a new building leased in November 1999. It is a well located and very functional Residence. The OR swimming pool has no changing room facilities attached to it.

### **Staff Quarters (SQs)**

5.3.6 The Mission Staff Quarters are all Crown-leased and are located at a reasonable distance from the Chancery. Five are deemed to be representational housing. Due to the current rotation cycle, there are two staff members living in SQs larger than their entitlement. The Housing Committee recognizes that finding appropriate accommodation, in keeping with the space guidelines, is not always easy given the local market. Additionally, fit-up of new SQs is both time-consuming and costly. The Mission Housing Committee is committed to housing staff appropriately within the guidelines and has made efforts to this end. Recent acquisitions demonstrate this commitment, and the Audit Team did not find the housing styles or sizes to be excessive.

5.3.7 SQ 3240067 has an Accommodation Deficiency Adjustment (ADA) of 20 percent on-going. The areas in which this property was awarded ADA points cannot, for the most part, be remedied because the property has been designated a heritage site (constructed circa 1750), and major or even cosmetic improvements cannot be made. As well, there is no green space attached to the house, it has a very poor layout for representation, and can only be accessed on foot during the day as it is located on a street closed to vehicles.

## **Recommendation for the Mission**

### **5.3.8 Dispose of SQ 3240067.**

## **Mission Response**

### **5.3.8 The Mission disposed of SQ 3240067 in August 2001, upon the departure of the Program Head who was living there.**

## **Property Planning**

5.3.9 The Mission Property Management Plan (MPMP) is up to date and complete and contains appropriate details on each SQ and the OR. PRIME is also up to date indicating, among other things, the expected maintenance costs over the next five years. However, a maintenance work plan has not been developed for all properties.

5.3.10 Work orders are submitted on paper or occasionally by telephone to the DMCO. These work requests are sorted by priority and then passed on to the Property Assistant for action. At the time of the audit, the Property Assistant was \*\*\* and a contractor was working in his place. Service was perceived to be excellent. A review of files revealed that some CBS members had not signed an Occupancy Agreement for their SQ and some Distribution Accounts had not been completed. A spousal contract had been signed to bring these up to date.

## **Recommendations for the Mission**

### **5.3.11 Prepare a maintenance work plan for all SQs.**

### **5.3.12 Update Distribution Accounts.**

### **5.3.13 Ensure Occupancy Agreements are signed by all CBS.**

## **Mission Responses**

### **5.3.11 The Mission is trying to prepare a maintenance work plan for each SQ.**

### **5.3.12 Distribution Accounts are now up to date.**

### **5.3.13 Occupancy Agreements are being prepared for signature by all CBS.**

## **Surplus Assets**

5.3.14 The Mission has held surplus asset sales in past years but has not maximized returns due to a perceived lack of buyers. A wider audience would potentially allow for better prices to be received for goods. The LES were included, in accordance with regulations. Recent sales were not advertised but were made known by word of mouth. Few bidders showed up and the Mission consequently had to accept lower bids than expected and was forced to sell large quantities of items to only a few buyers.

### **Recommendation for the Mission**

**5.3.15 Ensure as wide an audience as possible for surplus asset sales.**

### **Mission Response**

**5.3.15 Recent sales, which did not involve very many articles, were held according to Department regulations.**

## **5.4 Financial Management**

5.4.1 The Finance Section is effectively managed by the MCO, who supervises one Accountant (LE-07). The Accountant has been at the Mission for 17 years and is very experienced and competent. The DMCO co-signs cheques with the MCO and verifies payments, ensuring supporting documentation is always attached. The Mission operates two local-currency bank accounts, one convertible and one non-convertible. The non-convertible bank account is used to hold local currency from Immigration revenues and proceeds from disposals of surplus assets. The convertible bank account is used for expenditures such as salaries.

### **Accountant Back-Up**

5.4.2 The Accountant has no designated or fully trained back-up. Occasionally, the Consular Assistant provides some services as the back-up, but she has not had sufficient training in IMS to be able to give full support to the Finance Section.

### **Recommendation for the Mission**

**5.4.3 Give consideration to the designation of an existing position as Accounts back-up, and train that individual.**

## **Mission Response**

- 5.4.3 With the opening of the satellite Mission in Tripoli and the increased workload, we will have to request an additional position for an assistant accountant. This position was previously requested, but refused in March 2001.**

## **Review of Accounts Procedures**

5.4.4 The input document used to enter expenditures in IMS is not being certified under Section 34 of the Financial Administration Act (FAA). This document is used as an internal control to support claims, invoices or any other payments and it leaves an adequate record in the Mission's accounts. The input document contains a variety of important information, such as invoice number, exchange rate and signature. The input document should include a signature of an employee who has authorization to sign under Section 33, as well as under Section 34.

5.4.5 \*\*\*

## **Recommendations for the Mission**

**5.4.6 Ensure Section 33 and 34 signatures on IMS input documents.**

5.4.7 \*\*\*

## **Mission Responses**

**5.4.6 Since the arrival of the MCO, all documents are signed in accordance with Sections 33 and 34 of the Act.**

5.4.7 \*\*\*

## **Hospitality**

5.4.8 The hospitality diaries were generally in good order. The complete diaries were not being sent to the MCO for review and approval. It was also noted that the per capita hospitality rates do not state whether alcohol is included. These rates need to be approved by the CMM. The Mission needs to revisit its practice of providing a \$10 reimbursement to employees using their personal motor vehicles to get to hospitality events. The Mission accepts a high number of statutory declarations in support of payments. These can only be used under exceptional circumstances.

## **Recommendations for the Mission**

- 5.4.9            Ensure CBS forward the complete hospitality diary to the MCO for the quarterly review.**
- 5.4.10          Ensure per capita rates are clear, and approved by the CMM.**
- 5.4.11          Reconsider the appropriateness of reimbursing CBS for using PMVs for hospitality events.**

## **Mission Responses**

- 5.4.9            The complete hospitality diaries are all sent to the MCO for purposes of the quarterly review.**
- 5.4.10          Per capita rates are currently being reviewed by the CMM.**
- 5.4.11          Same as 5.4.10.**

## **Banking System and Services**

- 5.4.12          \*\*\***
- 5.4.13          \*\*\*** Due to the amount of work generated by this task for both Mission staff and HQ, this privilege should be revisited. Bank machines are becoming more prevalent around the capital city, and if the services of local banking institutions are reliable, these should be used.

## **Recommendation for the Mission**

- 5.4.14          Personal banking services for CBS should be reviewed and discontinued if viable alternatives are available.**

## **Mission Response**

- 5.4.14          The MCO has for several months been studying the various banking services provided to CBS in order to assess other options.**

## **Official Receipts**

- 5.4.15          The Accountant, Consular Assistant, Immigration Cashier and Consular Assistant in Tripoli each have an Official Receipt book. After review, it was noted that the top or white copy is given to the client and all other copies are attached to Mission accounts. In keeping with sound management practices, the second copy should be**



kept in the Mission accounts, the third one should be kept on file by the Section receiving the revenue, and the last copy should be left in the booklet. Employees using Official Receipts should submit depleted booklets to the MCO (or the DMCO) before acquiring new ones. Used booklets should be kept by one of these CBS in an office shell.

### **Recommendation for the Mission**

**5.4.16 Exercise better control over official receipts.**

### **Mission Response**

**5.4.16 Implemented.**

### **Contract Review Board**

5.4.17 The Mission does not have an active Contract Review Board (CRB). This committee should consist of three or four CBS. A CRB ensures that every contract over a certain value is appropriately awarded. The CRB can also play an important role by ensuring that any proposed contracts with spouses and dependants are awarded in a transparent and fair manner. For contracts below a certain threshold, the review can be conducted by the MCO or DMCO alone.

5.4.18 All the Mission's service contracts were renewed just prior to the previous MCO's departure. A review of the files showed that the same suppliers have been used frequently, and there was no evidence of a competition process having been followed in the selection of these suppliers.

### **Recommendations for the Mission**

**5.4.19 Establish a CRB to review and approve all contracts exceeding a specified minimum value.**

**5.4.20 Ensure value for money by making the contracting process more competitive.**

### **Mission Responses**

**5.4.19 With only six CBS members, including the HOM, the Management Committee also acts as a CRB, and all contracts exceeding the specified minimum value are approved by the CMM on a case-by-case basis.**

**5.4.20 Before awarding a contract, the new MCO requires several estimates with value for money in mind.**

### **Immigration Revenues**

5.4.21 \*\*\*

5.4.22 \*\*\*

### **Recommendation for the Mission**

**5.4.23 Ensure the original cash register tapes are given to the Accountant for retention in Mission Accounts files.**

### **Mission Response**

**5.4.23 For the time being, cash register tapes are kept by the Program Head in the Chancery vault, but are transported to the Accounts Section. The visa office is encouraging payment by certified cheque or money order, with the eventual goal of requiring payment by these methods alone. However, local conditions do not always make it easy to obtain these negotiable instruments.**

## **5.5 Information Management**

5.5.1 The Information Management Function is managed by the MCO, with the assistance of a Systems Administrator (LE-08) who was hired to fill this newly created position in the fall of 2000. She had been the Political Assistant previously and had also been the SIGNET Support Assistant. She currently handles first level technical support and general trouble-shooting, and offers basic training as required on the standard suite of software packages available to all staff.

5.5.2 The Regional Systems Manager (RSM) is based in Paris. The Mission's Technician (EL) is resident in Rome. There have been issues with the telephone system, where the lines for callers signal busy. On-site support over the past year has been limited. At the time of the audit, a telephone switch upgrade was scheduled.

5.5.3 Filing is up to date, and regular file sorting and destruction is carried out as per regulations. Sensitive material is well documented, with receipts and destruction documentation on file. Complete inventories of both hardware and software are kept, and there is a large inventory of surplus computers.

## **Recommendation for the Mission**

**5.5.4            Dispose of the surplus Informatics equipment as per regulations.**

## **Mission Response**

**5.5.4            The Mission now donates all surplus or obsolete Informatics equipment to a university or school, as per regulations and with the HOM's consent.**

## MISSION RESOURCES FACT SHEET

## Human Resources (FTEs)

PROGRAM	CBS	LES	TOTAL
HOM Office	2	5	7
IBD	1	2	3
General Relations	1	2	3
Development	1	1	2
Immigration	1	4	5
Consular	0	2*	2
Administration	2	9	11
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>33</b>

\* One LE-07 in Tripoli

## Physical Resources

ASSETS	CROWN-OWNED	CROWN-LEASED
Chancery	0	1
OR	0	1
SQs	0	8*
Vehicles	5	0

\* One SQ was retained for family of previous MCO, cross-posted to Algiers.

## Financial Information 2000/2001

LES Salaries	\$ 432,693
Operating	1,306,066
Capital	110,000
CBS Overtime	25,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,873,759</b>