

AUDIT
OF
THE CANADIAN EMBASSY

CONAKRY

January 2000

Audit Division (SIV)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An audit of the International Business Development (IBD), Political and Economic Relations and Public Affairs (PERPA), Consular and Administration programs was conducted at the Canadian Embassy in Conakry from February 15 to February 17, 1999. The previous audit of the Administration and Consular Programs was conducted in 1994.

ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM

The Audit Team found significant shortcomings in overall planning and management of the Administration Program. There was no evidence of planning, establishing objectives or priority setting. The Program is reactive with few established procedures. This situation has been an ongoing one at the Mission and needs to be properly addressed. A root cause is that SPV has been unable to attract or unwilling to assign individuals at the AS 04 level to the Management Consular Officer (MCO) position. Individuals without the appropriate skills and training are therefore placed in the MCO position. The incumbent is a CR 04.

Human resource management requires considerable attention in the area of locally engaged staff (LES) compensation and the establishment of accurate position and employee information.

Shortcomings were also found in the area of physical resources, particularly in disposal and storage of Crown assets and record keeping. The Mission has not been using proper procedures for the sale of surplus assets and does not have proper control over the collection of sale proceeds. These issues were discussed in detail with the Head of Mission (HOM) and the MCO, and immediate procedural changes were recommended. The properties are in good condition and clients are satisfied with the services provided. The Chancery has recently undergone an extensive renovation and provides very good working conditions. Staff quarter inventory should be reviewed and a market study completed, determining if more suitable and secure housing is available. The Mission has been very successful in reducing rental costs on all properties since 1994. The Audit Team found that the Property Section is over-resourced in terms of maintenance staff and mission chauffeurs, and is recommending a review of the resources in the section with a view to reducing the present complement.

Dakar serves as the financial hub for the Mission. This arrangement works well. However, the overall lack of planning and control of finance matters at the management level has resulted in significant lapsed funds.

SIGNET and MITNET were installed in the Mission in 1995, and these systems have significantly improved the Mission's ability to communicate with HQ and other missions. Secure communications continue to present challenges to the Mission

because of unreliable local telephone lines. The Mission is up-to-date on compliance reporting for Year 2000 and will now begin work on contingency planning.

CONSULAR PROGRAM

The Consular Program was very active from December until February with the evacuation from Sierra Leone of 29 persons. Under the direction of the MCO, the LES Consular/Immigration Assistant spends 60% of her time delivering immigration services for visitor visas and student authorization issuances, and the balance of her time providing consular, passport and citizenship services.

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT (IBD) PROGRAM

With very modest resources, this is both an efficient and effective Program.

POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC RELATIONS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS (PERPA) PROGRAMS

The Political and Economic Relations and Public Affairs (PERPA) Programs are minor mission programs consuming less than one full-time equivalent (FTE) of mission personnel resources. CIDA's Canadian Cooperation Centre (CCC) issues a newsletter on a regular basis publicizing Canada's development assistance initiatives, including those in the areas of human rights, good governance and democratic development. The addition of Sierra Leone as a country of non-resident accreditation will increase the requirement for political reporting.

ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM

1.1 Management of Program

1.1.1 A CR 04 is currently acting in the MCO position (AS 04). The management of the Administration Section is very weak. The Administration Program is left to run on its own without the benefit of established procedures. There was no evidence of planning, established objectives or priority setting.

1.1.2 Most Program areas were found to be severely lacking, and examples of Program deficiencies are more specifically dealt with in the various sections of this report. In general, the administrative files and records are incomplete and there is no evidence of forward planning. Workplans have not been developed, nor have administrative objectives been established or discussed with the administrative staff. Specific Program procedures and systems do not exist.

1.1.3 It is important to note that the existing situation at the Mission was not created by the present administration but has existed for many years. There are several reasons for this, but foremost is the inability of SPV to attract and assign individuals at the AS 04 level to the position. As a result, SPV has assigned individuals to the position who do not possess the required skill set and who have not received the appropriate training to adequately discharge the duties of the position.

1.1.4 Given the ongoing difficulties in recruiting suitable candidates for the MCO position, a plausible approach is to restructure the organization in an effort to minimize reliance on the position and facilitate the delivery of the Program. There are a number of steps which could be considered to accomplish this:

- Temporarily assign an experienced AS to Conakry to establish the administrative procedures and systems which are required for the effective management of the Program.
- Extend the current “hub and spoke” relationship between Dakar and Conakry to include all areas of Administration and formalize the arrangement.
- Review the MCO position as a result of the new “hub and spoke” arrangement with a view to either reclassifying the position to reflect the new duties of the position or to converting the position to an LES “EXPAT” position. Consideration could also be given to exchanging the AS position in Conakry with the CR position in Dakar to manage the spoke from Dakar.

1.1.5 While there is no easy solution, it is clear that to continue with the present arrangement in Conakry will only exacerbate the problem, and a long-term solution to the problem needs to be identified.

Recommendation for PAM

- 1.1.6 Re-evaluate the AS 04 MCO position and the hub and spoke arrangement with Dakar, and determine the appropriate course of action to ensure the provision of effective administrative services to the Mission.**

PAM Response

- 1.1.6 The subject of the current arrangement between Dakar and Conakry has not yet been resolved, but is being addressed as part of a review of the hub and spoke network in Africa. In the short term, we have asked HPF for assistance to identify an individual to send for a period of three weeks to a month to provide assistance and advice to the Mission. We are hopeful that this can be accomplished shortly. In the medium term, we have been advised that an MCO currently at the AS-04 level has been identified for assignment to Conakry during the next posting cycle, to which PAM has agreed.**

Hub and Spoke Arrangement

1.1.7 There is no formal “hub and spoke” agreement between Dakar and Conakry. However, Dakar is responsible for entering all financial data into FINEX and will continue with that responsibility with the implementation of IMS. The arrangement works well and there is a good level of cooperation between the two missions. Dakar also provides the Mission with support and guidance on all financial issues. There is no need to formalize the current arrangement between the missions unless the relationship is broadened as detailed above.

Mission Committees

1.1.8 While Conakry is a small mission with only three Canada-based staff (CBS), regular CMMs are held. The Mission does not have a Housing Committee but one is struck when required. The Mission does not have an Occupational Safety and Health Committee (OSH), nor does it have a Contract Review Board.

Recommendation for Mission

- 1.1.9 Establish an OSH Committee and a Contract Review Board.**

Mission Response

- 1.1.9 A Contract Review Board was established after the audit engagement was completed. All transactions above 2.5M Guinean**

francs (GF) (C\$4800) are systematically reviewed by this board, and all purchase orders above 1.0M GF (C\$1900) are approved by the Ambassador.

The Mission did not have an OSH Committee because, according to the guidelines on departmental representatives and committees, it was not required to do so as [TRANSLATION] “a workplace employing usually fewer than 20 employees” (paragraph 4.0 of the guidelines). However, at the beginning of the year 2000, the Mission will appoint a safety and health representative from among its employees in accordance with paragraph 28 of the same guideline.

1.2 Human Resources

1.2.1 The Management of Human Resources is the responsibility of the MCO. The MCO has a good relationship with the LES. However, the overall management of the function was found to be lacking, particularly with LES compensation and personnel records.

Personnel Records

1.2.2 A review of personnel and position files by the Audit Team revealed a considerable lack of documentation, consequently impeding the reconstruction of an accurate employee or position history. EXT 208s were not filed consistently or could not be found. All 16 LES appraisals are out-of-date, the latest having been completed in 1993. Job descriptions were neither dated nor signed by the employee.

Recommendations for Mission

- 1.2.3 **Conduct a review of all personnel records and re-create and maintain employee and position histories.**
- 1.2.4 **Complete all outstanding appraisals.**
- 1.2.5 **Provide LES with their respective job descriptions so that they may sign and date them.**

Mission Responses

- 1.2.3 **Personnel records have been reviewed and employee histories are up-to-date.**

1.2.4 All appraisals will be completed by the end of December 1999.

1.2.5 All job descriptions have been signed by the employees and placed in their files.

Enhance Reliability Checks

1.2.6 There is no evidence on LES files that Enhanced Reliability Checks (ERC) have been completed in the past. ERCs must be completed for all indeterminate, contract, term or emergency employees hired locally. These checks must be completed prior to making an offer of employment.

Recommendation for Mission

1.2.7 Ensure that ERCs are completed prior to issuing an offer of employment.

Mission Response

1.2.7 This recommendation was implemented at all employee levels after the audit engagement was completed. ERC applications have been introduced for other LES at the Mission.

LES Compensation

1.2.8 A full salary and benefits survey was conducted in 1997 in conjunction with the conversion to the 10-step salary scale. The MCO indicated that she was preparing to update the LES Handbook, which was last updated in 1992, but could not provide the Audit Team with the results of the 1997 benefits survey. The survey, obtained from SPSA, resulted in changes to the LES benefits. These changes to the benefits are not reflected in the current Handbook.

1.2.9 A meeting held with LES indicated that the economic situation has changed in Conakry and that a review of the salary and benefits package would be in order for 1999, particularly with respect to transportation, cost-of-living and death benefits.

1.2.10 The Mission contributes to the local social security system (CNSS) on behalf of the LES. The Mission and the LES Committee question the reliability of the CNSS pension benefits. There are concerns about the viability of the social security system and the ability to access the benefits when required.

Recommendations for Mission

- 1.2.11 Update the LES Handbook to include the results of the 1997 benefits survey.**
- 1.2.12 Conduct a full salary and benefits survey and submit to SPSA/SPSL for review.**
- 1.2.13 Determine the solvency and reliability of the CNSS with SPSL.**

Mission Responses

- 1.2.11 The LES Handbook has been updated and distributed to the employees.**
- 1.2.12 In accordance with SPSL analyses, employees received a salary increase retroactive to April 1, 1999, after the audit engagement. However, the Mission is continuing to follow up with its permanent correspondents regarding benefits issues, and sent information on this subject to SPSL before it decided to increase the salaries of Mission employees.**
- 1.2.13 An audit financed by the World Bank is currently being conducted by Ernst & Young to verify the solvency and reliability of the CNSS. When the results of this audit are known, the Mission will decide with SPSL on the next steps to be taken regarding this issue.**

1.3 Physical Resources

1.3.1 The management of Physical Resources is the responsibility of the MCO, with daily operations delegated to the Locally Engaged (LE) Property Manager (ASST 06). The Property Manager has been in the position since 1990 and, prior to this time, worked for two years as a LE Electrician/Handyman. He is knowledgeable about the Program, and interviews with staff in the Mission indicated satisfaction with the level of services provided by the section. This employee is also the SIGNET Support Assistant (SSA) for the Mission. Despite some shortcomings in overall planning and management of the Program in disposals and storage of Crown assets and in record keeping, properties were found to be in good condition. However, the Audit Team found that the Property Section was over-resourced and, consequently, properties were subject to considerable staff attention.

Property Portfolio

1.3.2 The Mission has just completed a renovation of the Chancery facilities, with major changes being made in the reception and waiting room area. The office is well-maintained and the facilities are suitable to operations. The Development Section Field Support Unit is located in an apartment building next to the Chancery, with a connecting entry to the Chancery compound.

1.3.3 The three staff quarters (SQ) were viewed by the Audit Team and were found to be well-maintained. As a Category 3 Mission, there is no Official Residence. The current SQs have been part of the Mission inventory since at least 1990. The SQ designated for the HOM is well-located and has had significant renovations over the past several years. It is appropriate to the needs of the Mission.

1.3.5 The lease on PR3060013 expires June 30, 1999. *** The SQ is large and is located on an expansive piece of property. This SQ has traditionally been used for the MCO and also exceeded space guidelines for previous tenants. The market has opened up over the past few years and offers a better choice of residential properties. The Audit Team sees this as a good time to identify a replacement SQ that would be more in line with Treasury Board guidelines and the Mission profile, but that would still provide the flexibility required in the inventory ***. It is noted that the rent will likely be higher on any new acquisitions. Although current maintenance costs are not considered excessive, it is hoped that rental increases will be at least partially offset by lower maintenance, utility and security costs for a smaller SQ.

1.3.6 The Mission Property Management Plan (MPMP) was last updated in March 1995. SRD requires the plan to be reviewed annually.

Recommendations for Mission

1.3.7 Conduct a market study to determine the availability of suitable housing with a view to replacing PR3060013 in 1999. The Mission should complete a cost/benefit analysis to compare possible new rental costs against current rental costs plus maintenance, utility and security costs.

1.3.8 Update the MPMP and ensure it is updated annually.

Mission Responses

1.3.7 The Mission has completed a cost/benefit analysis to decide whether this SQ should be kept or changed. In light of the decrease offered to

us by the owner and all of the costs the Crown must cover when an SQ is changed, the market analysis enabled us to determine that it was better to keep the current SQ.

1.3.8 The MPMP was reviewed with the Regional Maintenance Officer during his visit to Conakry in May 1999. Next year's MPMP will be established in accordance with the departmental guidelines we have just received.

Leases

1.3.9 The Mission has made considerable efforts to reduce rental and related costs over the past few years. Monthly rental costs in 1994 and in 1998 are noted in the following chart:

MONTHLY RENTS IN US DOLLARS		
	1994	1998
PR3060002, Chancery	\$2 400.00	\$1 700.00
PR3060004, HOM SQ	\$4 500.00	\$4 250.00
PR3060009, CIDA Program Manager SQ	\$3 500.00	\$2 500.00
PR3060013, MCO SQ	\$3 500.00	\$2 700.00

1.3.10 The Mission is to be congratulated on these significant rental reductions. The Mission notes that the rent on the Chancery is below market cost mainly due to the renovations recently completed, which were not funded by the owner. It is expected that the next renewal, in December 2001, will see an increase in rental costs.

1.3.11 In renegotiating the lease on PR3060004, the Mission expanded the clauses outlining the landlord's obligations for maintenance, making them clearer and more precise. The Mission will be requiring more detailed clauses in all future lease renewals.

Disposal of Surplus Assets

1.3.12 The Audit Team noted several areas of concern with the method used for disposals of Crown assets:

- The Mission held closed sales of Crown assets. These sales were open only to LES and FSU employees and their families, as well as some outside contacts.

Departmental regulations clearly state that LES are not allowed to bid on the purchase of surplus Crown assets unless a sale, which is open to the public, is held.

- The LES involved in the administration of sales have been allowed to submit bids. Any LES involved in the administration of a sale, i.e. determining items to be sold, opening bids or collecting money, cannot bid, as this is considered to be a conflict of interest. In some cases, it appears as though the administration of a sale was left entirely in the hands of an LES. Sales should be under the direct control of a CBS, and LES can assist but should not be in charge.
- In a sale held in May 1998, a suggested price, as opposed to a minimum acceptable price, was used and, for the most part, that was the price that was paid. In accordance with the *Crown Disposals Act*, there is an obligation on the part of the Mission to obtain the best price possible. The method used in this sale does not provide the Audit Team with the assurance that this was the case.
- The Mission does not use official receipts in accordance with Departmental policy. When payment is received for sale proceeds, a non-official receipt is given. When the sale proceeds are remitted to the Accounting Section, an official receipt for the total amount received is issued. The Mission was informed that official receipts must be used for all receipts of monies.
- The Mission has allowed payments for the sale of Crown assets to be made in instalments when the purchaser is an LES. This practice should be discontinued, and the full amount should be collected at the time of sale and immediately credited to the Mission bank account and entered in FINEX.
- Disposal files were found to be incomplete, and it was impossible to follow the administration of a sale from start to finish. Disposal files should contain everything related to a sale, i.e. contracts, advertisements, inventories, offers, analysis, final disposition, copies of all official receipts, disposal forms, list of remaining items and what would be done with them, list of persons involved in the sale and their role, etc.

1.3.13 There were significant holdings in the storage facility at the time of the Audit. Some belong to the FSU and some to the Embassy. There is no formal inventory of the articles in storage, the store rooms are disorganized and dirty, and some items are not properly stored.

Recommendations for Mission

1.3.14 Disposal of surplus assets should follow the guidelines as set out in Chapter 7 of the Materiel Management Manual.

- 1.3.15 Sales of Crown assets should be under the direct supervision of a CBS.**
- 1.3.16 The Mission must ensure that LES participating in the administration of a sale are not permitted to bid.**
- 1.3.17 Cease the practice of setting suggested prices.**
- 1.3.18 Issue an official receipt to each individual purchasing items in a sale.**
- 1.3.19 Maintain a file outlining the complete history and administration of a disposal exercise.**
- 1.3.20 Complete a clean-out of the storage facility, prepare an inventory of holdings in the storage facility and proceed with a disposal exercise in accordance with government regulations.**

Mission Responses

- 1.3.14 The Mission will ensure that the guidelines in Chapter 7 of the Materiel Management Manual are complied with to the letter during any future disposal of assets.**
- 1.3.15 The recommendation has been noted. However, we would like to emphasize that the Mission has always conducted sales of Crown assets under the direct supervision of a CBS, contrary to what is indicated in paragraph 1.3.12 of the audit report.**
- 1.3.16 The recommendation has been noted. The Mission will ensure that, in the future, LES participating in the administration of Crown assets are excluded from sales.**
- 1.3.17 The recommendation has been noted. In future, the Mission will use the minimum price approach as suggested by the Audit Team in order to avoid any negative interpretations regarding the Mission's intentions concerning its goal to obtain the best price possible.**
- 1.3.18 In future, an official receipt will be issued to each individual purchasing items at the time of the sale.**
- 1.3.19 The Mission will ensure that, in the future, a single file containing all documents related to an asset disposal exercise is maintained in**

order to avoid having documents in many files or having documents for many sales in the same file, as is currently the case.

- 1.3.20 An initial cleaning of the storage areas has been completed. A complete clean-out and inventory will be done by the end of 1999, and all surplus items will be sold at the beginning of next year. The Mission has not been able to proceed with these activities any faster because of the rainy season.**

Property Resources

1.3.21 The Property Section is well-resourced, with five full-time employees dedicated to property maintenance of the Chancery and the three SQs. The LE Property Manager is supported by a cleaner, a gardener, a handyman and an electrician. In addition, the Mission has another full-time cleaner on contract. The Audit Team was of the opinion that the size of the Mission and the number of properties does not justify the current complement.

1.3.22 The Mission also has four chauffeurs and five vehicles. The HOM has a dedicated chauffeur and vehicle, as does the CIDA Program. The Administration and Consular Programs also have two dedicated chauffeurs and vehicles. The HOM of a Category-3 Mission is not entitled to a dedicated vehicle. The Audit Team was of the opinion that four chauffeurs and vehicles for such a small Mission is excessive, and that a combined fleet instead of the present system of Program-dedicated drivers would result in a more efficient use of resources.

1.3.23 Each CBS is picked up and dropped off by an Embassy chauffeur daily. With the exception of the HOM, the CBS are paying commuting assistance for this service. As Conakry is a Category-3 Mission, the HOM is not provided with a vehicle under the HOM Directive and so is required to pay commuting assistance as well.

1.3.24 The electrician has a regular schedule of preventative maintenance and repair tasks. He keeps a log of his activities, but the log and his work are not always verified by the Property Manager. The handyman reports to the Property Manager each morning and is given his work assignments for the day. There is no log of his activities, and therefore no record of the work he undertakes. The work of the electrician and the handyman needs to be more closely monitored and controlled to ensure proper use of resources and completion of work.

Recommendations for Mission

- 1.3.25 Conduct a review of resources in the Property Section, including the chauffeurs, with a view to reducing the present complement. Once completed, a review of the vehicle fleet should be conducted as well.**

- 1.3.26 Collect commuting assistance from the HOM.**
- 1.3.27 Maintain a log of maintenance staff activities and ensure it is verified daily by the Property Manager.**

Mission Responses

1.3.25 Despite the rather specific situation in Conakry, the Mission will re-examine its needs in terms of vehicles and chauffeurs because, at first glance, the number of vehicles and chauffeurs in fact appears to be disproportionate to the size of the Mission. The analysis will focus in particular on the issue of using a “combined fleet” instead of the current system. The current system is not isolated because all vehicles and chauffeurs can be used by all programs when they are available.

With regard to resources for the other needs of the Property Section, the Mission has already terminated its contract with the cleaner. Using the staff activities log, the Mission will examine its staff needs by the end of December and act accordingly.

1.3.26 In future, the Mission will collect commuting assistance from the HOM. It should be noted that the Ambassador regularly has commitments outside of office hours, requiring the chauffeur to park the car being used at his residence in the evening. Also, since the establishment of the Mission in 1982, the chargés d'affaires ad interim have always had an official vehicle at their disposal without this policy of reimbursing commuting fees being implemented.

1.3.27 The Mission has established a card system indicating the daily activities of the maintenance staff.

Work Orders

1.3.28 The Mission does not have a formal system for work order requests. Requests for work are generally made orally to the MCO or to the Property Manager. The maintenance files only show reference to work done if there is an invoice for payment related to the repair. If the work is done entirely by the Property Section, there is no record of it on file. Property files do not reflect all the work being carried out, nor are they properly organized to provide a full leasing and maintenance history of each property.

Recommendation for Mission

- 1.3.29 Develop a work order system that will capture, in the Mission property files, the work being carried out on Mission properties.**

Mission Response

- 1.3.29 The Mission established a card system in March 1999 for submitting work orders to the Administration Section. An official system is therefore now in place.**

Security Deposits

1.3.30 There are no security deposits on any Crown-leased properties. However, the Team did find indications that there are existing deposits on telephone lines and cellular phone rentals. These deposits do not appear on the outstanding advance listing, as they were not coded as security deposits but as expenses. An investigation of a security deposit paid on a cellular phone in 1998 revealed that the deposit paid exceeded what was outlined in the contract. Mission records must be reviewed to determine if security deposits exist, and SBR consulted to determine how these recoverable expenses can be corrected in the IMS.

Recommendation for Mission

- 1.3.31 Compile a list of all existing security deposits and contact SBR to determine how those that have not been coded correctly can be properly captured in the IMS.**

Mission Response

- 1.3.31 A list of security deposits has been established. The Mission will contact SBR to determine how they can be coded and captured in the IMS.**

Gas Coupons

1.3.32 The Mission pays for gasoline for the official vehicles and diesel fuel for the generators with gas coupons. Control on the use of these coupons was seen to be adequate, but control of the bulk supply, which is kept in the security shell in the MCO's office, is not well-maintained. An in/out register should be established showing the running balance of the supply.

Recommendation for Mission

1.3.33 Establish controls on the bulk supply of gas coupons.

Mission Response

1.3.33 After the audit engagement, a register was established to record all of the Embassy's gas coupon purchases.

1.4 Finance

1.4.1 Financial services are provided by an Accountant (ASST 06) under the supervision of the MCO. At the time of the Audit, the Accountant had been on leave since November, but was ably replaced by a temporary accountant who was hired from outside the Mission.

1.4.2 The Mission has a "hub and spoke" relationship with Dakar on financial matters. Dakar is responsible for entering all financial data into FINEX and provides the Mission with support and guidance on all financial issues. There is a good level of cooperation between the two missions.

1.4.3 The day-to-day operations of the Accounting Section run well due to the input from Dakar and the ability of the current Accountant. However, there is an overall lack of planning and control with respect to financial matters at the management level. As a result, capital funds lapsed in FY 98/99, and there was a lack of control over the sale of surplus assets as discussed in section 1.3.12 of this report.

Financial Planning

1.4.4 Over half of the \$60 000 capital budget lapsed at the end of the fiscal year despite the fact that the risk of lapsing had been identified by PAM during the third quarter review. This was due to a lack of planning on the part of the MCO.

Cash Management

1.4.5 The Audit Team conducted a review of the bank reconciliation reports for November and December 1998. All adjustments were satisfactorily explained and there were no outstanding cheques. However, a review of bank statements from July 1998 to December 1998 revealed that bank balances in the USD and local currency accounts were high. This was due in part to Mission requests for funds transfers from Washington an average of twice a month, and because the cash requirements projected by the Development Section are broad estimates that could be more precise.

Recommendations for Mission

- 1.4.6 Increase the frequency of funds transfers from Washington.**
- 1.4.7 Obtain more precise written estimates from the Development Section outlining its cash requirements.**

Mission Responses

- 1.4.6 The Mission has added another funds transfer from Washington every month.**
- 1.4.7 The Mission has asked the Cooperation Section to provide written estimates of its cash requirements that are as precise as possible.**

Payment of Salaries

Value-Added Tax (VAT)

1.4.10 A value-added tax will be instituted in December 1999. The Mission will most likely be exempt from the VAT, but at the time of the audit, specific procedures from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) had not been communicated to missions, and it was not known whether the exemption would be at source or whether the tax would have to be paid and then recovered.

Recommendation for Mission

- 1.4.11 Continue to monitor the MFA's plans for VAT in cooperation with other diplomatic missions.**

Mission Response

- 1.4.11 The Mission has been following these issues very closely. The Ambassador and Administrative Officer have attended many meetings between embassies and with the Guinean authorities on this subject. The Mission is very much aware of this issue and is approaching the VAT in the same way as the other missions.**

Official Hospitality

1.4.12 Hospitality files were generally in good order, but the current Mission hospitality per-capita rates were established in 1995. The files revealed that rationale

for events was not always evident, in some cases the HOM signed his own claim under section 34 and, in one case, settlement of the claim was made in a currency different from that in which the advance was issued. The HOM took note of these comments and indicated that he will take appropriate action to ensure compliance in the future.

Recommendation for Mission

1.4.13 Review the Mission per-capita hospitality rates.

Mission Response

1.4.13 The new per-capita hospitality rate schedule and guidelines have been updated twice since the audit engagement was completed.

1.5 Information Management

1.5.1 The LE Property Manager has been the SSA for the Mission since 1996. Ten percent of his time is spent on providing support to 14 users in the Mission. The inventory of informatics equipment was reviewed and found to be in good order. The basic informatics skills of the LES are not well-developed despite the best efforts of the Mission. The Mission hired a consultant for two weeks in 1996 to provide basic training in WordPerfect and Quattro Pro, but staff are still lacking basic computer knowledge. Few local companies are capable of providing training at the level required by the Mission.

1.5.2 The MCO is responsible for Mission communications and the Registry. MITNET and SIGNET were installed in the Mission in 1995 and have greatly aided operations by providing reliable communications with DFAIT and CIDA HQs and other neighbouring missions.

Telephones

1.5.3 The Mission has not been monitoring telephone usage through Softel. There is a printer in the telephone room, but the MCO was unsure whether they had the Softel package at the Mission. The Mission was advised to contact the technician in Accra to discuss the possibility of installing a monitoring system so telephone usage could be monitored and personal calls could be charged back to employees.

Recommendation for Mission

1.5.4 Monitor telephone usage and ensure charges for personal calls are recovered from employees.

Mission Response

- 1.5.4 Telephone bills received by the Embassy are used to recover charges for personal calls from Mission employees. During his next visit, the technician posted in Accra will determine whether it is possible to install a call monitoring system.**

Scanner

- 1.5.5 The Mission purchased a scanner in 1998 but has been unable to put it into operation as no one knows how to use it. The Audit Team questions why the Mission would purchase a piece of equipment with which they are unfamiliar and without appropriate instruction on its installation and usage.

Year 2000

- 1.5.6 The SSA is aware of the potential problems related to the year 2000. He notes that there is little computerization in Guinea, and therefore the effects may be minor.

- 1.5.7 The Mission met its Year 2000 compliance reporting requirements in July 1998. At the time of the audit, the report on building systems had not yet been completed. The request for input into contingency planning had just arrived during the audit, and the MCO will be responsible for coordinating a response.

Recommendation for Mission

- 1.5.8 Complete the Year 2000 report on building systems and submit as requested.**

Mission Response

- 1.5.8 The report was submitted in March 1999.**

CONSULAR PROGRAM

2.1 Management of Program

2.1.1 The Program is under the direction of the MCO, with daily operations handled by the Consular/Immigration Assistant, who has been in the position since 1993. The Mission has been given the authority by CIC to issue visitor visas and student authorizations under the direction of Abidjan. The Consular/Immigration Assistant spends 60% of her time on immigration, 30% on consular and 10% on common services.

2.2 Service to Canadian Citizens

2.2.1 The Mission is accredited to Sierra Leone, responsibility for which was transferred from Accra in September 1998. Due to the outbreak of civil war in that country, the Mission spent considerable time arranging for the evacuation of approximately 29 persons and providing assistance to 21 others between December 1998 and February 1999. At the time of the audit, the evacuation was just wrapping up. The MCO handled the bulk of the workload related to the evacuations efficiently and effectively. JPD was very complimentary of the services provided by the Mission in support of the evacuation, and the Mission is to be congratulated for its efforts. The Consular Contingency plan for Guinea is up-to-date.

2.3 Passport Services

2.3.1 The passport inventory was reviewed and found to be in order. The Consular/Immigration Assistant is only given a small working supply of Identification and Observation labels. Passport blanks are given to her when required.

2.3.2 Passport and Consular revenues are generally not high and, as such, the Consular/Immigration Assistant has only been remitting them to the Accounting Section monthly. Immigration revenues are remitted to the Accounting Section weekly. Departmental regulations stipulate that all revenues must be deposited at least weekly, regardless of the amounts.

Recommendation for Mission

2.3.3 Consular revenues should be deposited at least weekly.

Mission Response

2.3.3 The revenues are now deposited weekly.

2.4 Honorary Consuls

2.4.1 There are no Honorary Consuls in the Mission territory.

2.5 Admission to Canada

Training

2.5.1 The Consular/Immigration Assistant has received both immigration and consular training. The MCO who arrived at the Mission in the summer of 1998 received immigration training in 1990 in preparation for an assignment to Bamako, where she was responsible for visa issuance. She has not received any further training in this area. She is responsible for all decisions related to the issuance or denial of visas and student authorizations, as well as for controlled documents and revenues related to the Program.

Recommendation for CIC

2.5.2 Provide appropriate visa training for the MCO.

CIC Response

2.5.2 CIC will take the necessary steps to provide appropriate visa training for the MCO.

Revenues

2.5.3 Immigration revenues are deposited weekly with the Accounting Section in accordance with regulations. When the Consular/Immigration Assistant receives payments for immigration and consular services, she issues a non-official receipt to the client. When she remits the total revenues for the week to the Accounting Section, she is issued an official receipt for the total amount remitted.

2.5.4 *** The Mission should consult with neighbouring missions, the Abidjan Immigration Section and JPD for suggestions on appropriate models that would provide the programming flexibility necessary to record the variety of fees received.

2.5.6 The MCO exercises appropriate control and maintains records of controlled documents. She also verifies all revenues but does not reconcile visa issues with revenues. The MCO should be verifying if the number of visas issued each week corresponds with the amount of cash collected.

Recommendations for Mission

- 2.5.7** **Issue official receipts to clients for all fees received. The use of non-official receipts should be discontinued.**
- 2.5.8** *******
- 2.5.9** **Provide a secure storage facility for the Consular/Immigration Assistant.**
- 2.5.10** **Reconcile visas issued with revenues collected.**

Mission Responses

- 2.5.7** **Official receipts are now used for all fees received.**
- 2.5.8** *******
- 2.5.9** **A box has been given to the Consular/Immigration Assistant for the secure storage of cheques.**
- 2.5.10** **The Mission has taken the necessary steps to have the MCO reconcile visas issued with revenues collected.**

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (IBD)

3.1 Management of Program

3.1.1 The small IBD Program is capably run by an LE Commercial Officer (CO), who reports direct to the HOM. *** He has excellent local contacts both in the government and the private sector. According to the Mission's most recent Personnel Utilization Profiles (PUPS), the CO and the HOM each spend 20% of their time on the IBD Program. However, interviews with the two employees and an examination of their diaries indicate the amount of time spent by the former is higher, and that of the latter, lower than that reported in the PUPS. The PUPS should be amended if they are inaccurate. Program support (0.2 FTE) is provided by the HOM's secretary.

3.1.2 As part of the pre-audit process, CIDA (INC) and GAF were consulted as to Mission performance. ***

3.1.3 Four sectoral priorities in Guinea have been defined, and a strategy for the import of Canadian consumer goods involving a CIDA line of credit was proposed in 1998. The proposal was not approved by CIDA, so the Mission is re-examining the strategy to see how it can be implemented. The CO does not have a CB IBD Program Officer in the region to whom he can address strategic or technical trade management questions such as the proposed import strategy. GAF and the Trade Commissioner Division should address this question to see if there is a better way to give assistance to LE COs in Francophone missions in West Africa.

3.1.4 Service standards under the Performance Measurement Initiative (PMI) have not yet been drafted because the CO has not had his PMI training.

3.1.5 The CO has an accurate, up-to-date job description, but he has no written trade objectives and activities for 1998/99 or for 1999/00.

Recommendations for the Mission

3.1.6 The Mission should examine the amount of work done by the HOM and the CO on the IBD Program and, if different from that currently reported, amend the Mission's PUPS accordingly.

3.1.7 The HOM should give the CO written objectives and activities for 1999/00 in support of IBD.

Recommendation for GAF

- 3.1.8 GAF should see if there is a way to help LE COs in Francophone missions in West Africa develop local trade strategies and give them strategic and technical advice.**

Mission Responses

- 3.1.6 The Mission has examined the amount of work done by the HOM and the CO. It has concluded that the CO spends more time using Mission personnel for trade activities than planned, and has amended the profile accordingly for the years 00/01.**
- 3.1.7 The Mission has developed a strategy and defined priority areas for the IBD Program. The CO has thorough knowledge of this strategy and these priorities. The HOM discusses them regularly with him. However, at the request of the Audit Team, the HOM will provide him with written objectives and activities.**

GAF Response

- 3.1.8 In order to implement recommendation 3.1.8, GAF encouraged GGTT to hold a week-long meeting beginning on March 13, 2000, in Libreville, Gabon, in order to discuss trade strategies, training and round tables, among other things. All 20 of our local officers in Sub-Saharan African postings are invited. GGTT, EDC, CIDA, TBF, TCS and HSP representatives will be sent to the meeting to discuss all of the factors involved in the healthy, effective administration of a trade section abroad. This kind of meeting is generally organized once a year.**

Also, technical training sessions (WIN, Strategis, etc.) are organized from time to time when needed. This was the case in Nairobi last month. If it is found during the above-mentioned meeting that such a need exists elsewhere in Africa, GAF will recommend, through GGTT, that this kind of session be held on short notice.

POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC RELATIONS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS (PERPA) PROGRAMS

4.1 Management of Programs

4.1.1 The Mission's PUPs indicate Program resources are the HOM (0.2 FTE), the Development Section Officer (0.1 FTE) and the LES IBD CO (0.1 FTE). All activity for the PERPA Programs in the PUPs relates to the political relations part of the Programs. Interviews with these Program employees and an examination of their diaries show that most of the activity is on advocacy/representation and visits management. It is difficult to reconcile the PUPs figures for any one employee with actual Program activity because the PUPs threshold activity level is 0.1 FTE. However, taken together for the three employees (0.4 FTE), the total is reasonable. All three employees have excellent contacts in Guinea and are able to use them effectively to carry out Program activities. Support for the Programs is provided by two LES (0.3 FTE).

4.1.2 GAF recognizes the limitations of the Programs, but has high praise for the Mission's reporting on the crisis in Sierra Leone and expects reports to continue as and when Mission staff are able to visit this country.

4.1.3 Because the most important Mission activity is the Development Program, most information activities are also directed at publicizing Canada's Aid and Development Program in Guinea. Included in this program is support for human rights, good governance and democratic development. The CCC, an organization contracted to CIDA, regularly publishes a newsletter, *Chinok et Harmattan*, to promote Canadian development activities in Guinea. This publication has wide distribution in Guinea and gives Canada a high local profile.

MISSION RESOURCE FACT SHEET

Personnel (FTEs)

	CBS	LES	Total
HOM	1	1	2
Administration/Consular	1*	12*	13
Development	1	3	4
Total	3.0	16	19

*MCO and LES devote 0.2 and 0.6 respectively to CIC activities.

Physical Resources

ASSETS	OWNED	LEASED
Chancery		1
OR		
SQs		3
Vehicles	5	

Financial Information FY 1998/99

LES Salaries (CV 017)	\$116 810
Operational (CV 014)	626 694
CB Overtime (CV 015)	4 000
Capital (CV 050)	61 984
Total	\$809 488