

Management's Response to Inspector General

In 2017, the Department of State's Office of Inspector General (OIG) identified management and performance challenges in the areas of: protection of people and facilities; oversight of contracts, grants, and foreign assistance; information security and management; financial and property management; operating in contingency and critical environments; workforce management; and promoting accountability through internal coordination and clear lines of authority. The Department promptly takes corrective actions in response to OIG findings and recommendations. Highlights are summarized below.

1 PROTECTION OF PEOPLE AND FACILITIES

The protection of people and facilities remains a top priority for the Department. In a very dangerous world, the Department is succeeding in keeping its personnel and facilities safe. Threats to our people and facilities will continue to evolve and requires constant focus and risk mitigation. To manage risk, the Department is developing its Enterprise Risk Management program. The Department annually revises the Security Environment Threat List and conducts High Threat Post Review Board assessments, and it is increasing the number of posts for which the Foreign Affairs Counter Threat training is mandatory. Despite these and other efforts, the challenge of eliminating risk and preventing attacks will continue given the nature of diplomacy and the environment.

Below is additional information about specific issues raised by the OIG and improvements the Department has made in its systems for protecting people and facilities.

- In response to evolving threats, the Department developed and implemented a mandatory High Threat Security Overseas Seminar training course for contractors to take prior to their deployment to contingency operation posts and critical environments.
- The Department disagrees with OIG's assertion that poor quality assurance and oversight of the construction process of two buildings at Embassy Kabul led to failure to adhere to electrical and fire safety standards.
 - The company that was consulted on these deficiencies had a conflict of interest. It was actively negotiating a maintenance contract with the U.S. Government and could have benefitted from identifying maintenance issues that required mitigation.
 - OIG conducted this audit during the warranty period. The majority of construction issues noted in the report are being mitigated by the contractor. The OIG is not following standard operating procedures in conducting an audit during an active construction project.
- The Department took steps to address issues OIG identified involving the maintenance of armored vehicles. The Department implemented an enhancement of the Fleet Management Information System (FMIS), which allows maintenance work orders to be created and tracked and captures maintenance data for domestically located armored vehicles. In addition, the FMIS system has been configured to alert and/or remind users that preventative maintenance is due or overdue.