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Office of Inspector General  
United States Department of State

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ISP-I-24-05

Office of Inspections

January 2024

# **Inspection of the U.S. Mission to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe**

BUREAU OF EUROPEAN AND EURASIAN AFFAIRS

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# HIGHLIGHTS

Office of Inspector General  
United States Department of State

ISP-I-24-05

## What OIG Inspected

OIG inspected the executive direction, policy and program implementation, and information management operations of the U.S. Mission to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

## What OIG Recommends

OIG made 2 recommendations to the U.S. Mission to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

In its comments on the draft report, the U.S. Mission to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe concurred with 2 recommendations. OIG considers both recommendations resolved. The U.S. Mission to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe's response to each recommendation, and OIG's reply, can be found in the Recommendations section of this report. The mission's formal response is reprinted in its entirety in Appendix B.

January 2024

OFFICE OF INSPECTIONS

BUREAU OF EUROPEAN AND EURASIAN AFFAIRS

## Inspection of the U.S. Mission to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

### What OIG Found

- The Ambassador and the Deputy Chief of Mission led the U.S. Mission to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in a professional and collaborative manner.
- The work of the U.S. Mission to the Organization of Security Cooperation in Europe's sections was aligned with its Integrated Mission Strategy, including the goal of maintaining support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity.
- The Public Diplomacy Section focused heavily on media engagement and arranged a large number of relevant and timely interviews for the Ambassador.
- The mission's records retention practices did not comply with Department of State standards.
- Spotlight on Success: The Public Diplomacy Section allocated 30 minutes of each week's hour-long staff meeting to discuss an aspect of strategic planning and how to apply it to the section's public diplomacy initiatives.

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## CONTEXT

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The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) is the largest regional security organization in the world encompassing over one billion people. The U.S. Mission to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (USOSCE) is tasked with advancing U.S. policy priorities within OSCE. Fifty-seven countries—spanning North America, Europe, and Asia—participate in OSCE, representing more than one billion people from Vancouver, Canada to Vladivostok, Russia. OSCE countries include all members of the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, but importantly it also includes countries that are not part of either of these organizations, such as Russia and the countries of Central Asia, the South Caucasus, and the Western Balkans.<sup>1</sup> OSCE is the only regional multilateral organization in which the United States and its allies regularly address security challenges directly with Russia as an equal participant.

OSCE's broad and comprehensive view of security includes human rights, civil society, and economic and environmental concerns, as well as political and military dimensions, making it a uniquely useful multilateral platform to advance U.S. security interests. The organization currently maintains 13 field missions in Ukraine, Moldova, the Balkans, and Central Asia that assist host countries in putting OSCE commitments into practice and foster local capacities through concrete projects.

USOSCE's FY 2022-2027 Integrated Mission Strategy (IMS), approved in August 2022, sets four policy goals:

- Maintain support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity.
- Advance the normalization of relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan and between Serbia and Kosovo; peaceful resolution of protracted conflicts in Moldova and Georgia; and regional integration (including the Western Balkans and Central Asian regions) through effective use of OSCE tools.
- Hold participating states accountable for the commitments they have made to advance security, economic, and environmental priorities shared by the United States, as well as uphold the U.S. commitment to human rights, democratic principles, and fundamental freedoms.
- Promote U.S. security interests in Europe to reduce the risk of conflict, sustain an open international system underwritten by strong democratic alliances and partnerships and counter transnational threats.

Furthermore, through these IMS goals, the mission prioritizes addressing Russia's aggression, as exemplified by the war in Ukraine. This is achieved primarily through the mission's policy

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<sup>1</sup> "Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Participating States," <https://www.osce.org/participating-states>.

statements at OSCE's weekly Permanent Council,<sup>2</sup> the Forum for Security Cooperation,<sup>3</sup> and other official and informal meetings; through the provision of resources for programs intended to strengthen security and stability in the OSCE region; and through alliances and partnerships within the OSCE that isolate Russia and counter its malign influence via a public diplomacy strategy expressing U.S. support for the OSCE, its independent institutions, and its field missions.

USOSCE is one of three U.S. missions in Vienna, Austria. The others are Embassy Vienna, which is responsible for the bilateral relationship with Austria, and the U.S. Mission to International Organizations in Vienna (UNVIE). The Department refers to the three missions as the Vienna Tri-Mission.

Embassy Vienna's Tri-Mission Joint Management Office provides management and information management support to both USOSCE and UNVIE. Embassy Vienna's Regional Security Office also supports all three missions. USOSCE and UNVIE share space in the IZD Tower, a 37-story commercial office building located approximately 8 kilometers from Embassy Vienna's compound. OSCE Headquarters and OSCE Secretariat, where many official meetings and numerous engagements with contacts are held, are slightly more than 6 kilometers from USOSCE's offices.

At the time of the inspection, USOSCE had 23 authorized U.S. direct-hire positions, 3 eligible family member positions, and 10 locally employed (LE) staff. Apart from the Front Office, USOSCE includes four sections that collaborate closely: the Political Section, the Arms Control Section, the Office of Resource Management, and the Public Diplomacy Section.

OIG evaluated USOSCE's executive direction, policy and program implementation, and information management operations consistent with Section 209 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980.<sup>4</sup> Concurrent with this inspection of USOSCE, OIG also inspected Embassy Vienna and UNVIE.<sup>5</sup> A related classified inspection report on the Vienna Tri-Mission includes discussion of the security program for the three missions, issues affecting the safety of mission personnel and facilities, and some facets of the missions' information management programs.

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<sup>2</sup> The Permanent Council is the principal decision-making body for regular political consultations and for governing the day-to-day operational work of the OSCE between the meetings of the Ministerial Council. It implements, within its area of competence, defined tasks and decisions taken by OSCE Summits and the Ministerial Council. See "Permanent Council," <https://www.osce.org/permanent-council>.

<sup>3</sup> The forum works to increase military security and stability in Europe and covers some of the most fundamental politico-military agreements of the OSCE participating states. It helps implement landmark confidence and security-building measures to regulate the exchange of military information and mutual verification between states, as well as the Code of Conduct, a key document ensuring the democratic control of security forces. See "Forum for Security Co-operation," <https://www.osce.org/forum-for-security-cooperation>.

<sup>4</sup> See Appendix A.

<sup>5</sup> OIG, *Inspection of Embassy Vienna, Austria* (ISP-I-24-04, December 2023) and *Inspection of the U.S. Mission to International Organizations in Vienna, Austria* (ISP-I-24-10, December 2023).

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTION

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OIG assessed USOCE's leadership based on interviews, staff questionnaires, and OIG's review of documents and observations of meetings and activities during the on-site portion of the inspection.

### **Tone at the Top and Standards of Conduct**

The Ambassador arrived at USOSCE in November 2021. Prior to his current position, he was the Managing Director of the Penn Biden Center for Diplomacy and Global Engagement at the University of Pennsylvania. He previously served in the Pentagon as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Russia, Ukraine, Eurasia, and Conventional Arms Control; in the White House as a foreign policy advisor to then-Vice President Biden; and as Director for Russia at the National Security Council. He was previously a Foreign Service officer with the Department of State (Department) and served overseas in the U.S. embassies in Poland, Slovenia, and Barbados.

The Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) is a member of the Senior Foreign Service with more than 25 years of experience. She arrived at USOSCE in August 2020, and served as Chargé d'Affaires from January to November 2021. She previously served as Minister Counselor for Public Affairs at Embassy London, and as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State in the Bureau of International Information Programs in Washington. Other overseas assignments include U.S. embassies in Georgia, Ukraine, Russia, Syria, and Haiti.

OIG found that the Ambassador and the DCM led the mission in a professional and coordinated manner and modeled integrity and ethical behavior, consistent with the Department's leadership principles in 3 Foreign Affairs Manual (FAM) 1214b.<sup>6</sup> OIG's observations and discussions with mission personnel indicated a pronounced traditional division of responsibilities between the Ambassador and the DCM. The Ambassador focused on external and outward-facing activities, including the intense policy agenda and engagement with external contacts, while the DCM attended to internal processes, staff, and morale concerns, making herself available to mission personnel through daily engagement in individual meetings, informal mentoring sessions, and regularly scheduled staff and section meetings.

Through interviews, questionnaires, and on-site observation, OIG found that the heavy additional workload brought on by Russia's February 2022 full-scale invasion of Ukraine, without a commensurate increase in resources or personnel, caused considerable fatigue and the potential risk of staff burnout or morale problems over the long term. USOSCE, through the Mission Resource Request process, requested one additional position in the Political Section, another in the Public Diplomacy Section, and a third in the Office of Resource Management to help address this additional workload. However, despite the intense workload and operational

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<sup>6</sup> The Department's leadership and management principles outlined in 3 FAM 1214b are (1) model integrity, (2) plan strategically, (3) be decisive and take responsibility, (4) communicate, (5) learn and innovate constantly, (6) be self-aware, (7) collaborate, (8) value and develop people, (9) manage conflict, and (10) foster resilience.

tempo, OIG found USOSCE staff maintained a strong and positive sense of mission and purpose in their work.

Finally, OIG determined that the Ambassador and the DCM modeled integrity and ethical behavior in accordance with the Department's leadership principles in 3 FAM 1214b. The Front Office maintained a thorough and up-to-date gift registry as required in 2 FAM 962.7, and coordinated and consulted with the Joint Management Office when questions regarding ethical or legal issues arose in accordance with 2 FAM 963b.

## **Execution of Foreign Policy Goals and Objectives**

Since February 2022, Ukraine has dominated USOSCE priorities. The Ambassador, the DCM, and the entire USOSCE staff advanced U.S. policy priorities related to Ukraine with counterparts in Vienna. Washington stakeholders praised the Ambassador for his leadership in guiding allies in OSCE toward the achievement of shared goals, and for helping to bring the OSCE Conference on the Human Dimension, an important human rights forum, to fruition.<sup>7</sup> Washington stakeholders also highlighted the Ambassador and USOSCE's work on public messaging and social media.

The mission reviewed its IMS in October 2022, involving all USOSCE sections, consistent with Department guidance in 18 FAM 301.2-4(D), to conduct such reviews. OIG determined the IMS was well aligned with Department and National Security priorities. Department and mission officials told OIG they considered the Ambassador a key U.S. voice in countering Russia's narratives and a leader who has significant influence and good working relationships with policymakers at the White House and across the interagency community.

## **Adherence to Internal Controls**

OIG determined the mission completed the Annual Chief of Mission Management Control Statement of Assurance process in August 2022, in accordance with Department guidance in 2 FAM 022.7(5) and 2 FAM 024d. The mission did not identify any material weaknesses or deficiencies. During the inspection, the embassy updated the Chief of Mission Delegation of Authorities.

### ***Deputy Chief of Mission Did Not Attend ICASS Council Meetings as Required***

OIG found the DCM did not attend Vienna Tri-Mission International Cooperative Administrative Support Services (ICASS)<sup>8</sup> Council meetings, as required by 6 Foreign Affairs Handbook (FAH)-5

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<sup>7</sup> For more information on the OSCE Human Dimension Conference, see the USOSCE website at: <https://osce.usmission.gov/warsaw-human-dimension-conference-2023/>; and the OSCE website at: <https://www.osce.org/chairmanship/2023whdc>.

<sup>8</sup> The International Cooperative Administrative Support Services, or ICASS, is the principal means by which U.S. government agencies share the cost of common administrative support services at most diplomatic and consular posts overseas. Through the ICASS working capital fund, service providers recover the cost of delivering administrative support services to other agencies at overseas missions.

H-222.2a. As the Ambassador's representative, the DCM is required to attend all ICASS Council meetings to ensure oversight and accountability for administrative management. The DCM was unaware of this requirement. Failure to participate in ICASS meetings prevents the DCM from ensuring that USOSCE receives the appropriate level of administrative services provided through the Joint Management Office platform.

**Recommendation 1:** The U.S. Mission to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe should require the Deputy Chief of Mission to attend International Cooperative Administrative Support Services Council meetings, in accordance with Department guidance. (Action: USOSCE)

## **Security and Emergency Planning**

OIG interviews and document reviews showed the Ambassador and the DCM fully supported the mission's security program, in accordance with 3 FAM 1214b(3) and (7) to take responsibility and collaborate, and 2 FAM 113.1c(5) to develop policies and programs to protect U.S. officials and their dependents abroad. OIG found the Ambassador and the DCM led by example in participating in fire and security drills and urged mission personnel to fully participate as well. The Vienna Tri-Mission Regional Security Office resumed in-person security briefings and on-premises security drills in late 2022, following their suspension during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## **Equal Employment Opportunity and Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility**

OIG determined there were no reported Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) cases involving USOSCE, and the mission's EEO program and commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) principles complied with Department standards in 3 FAM 1511.1a,<sup>9</sup> the leadership principles in 3 FAM 1214b(6), and the Secretary's guidance on diversity and inclusion in cable 21 STATE 60514.<sup>10</sup> EEO and DEIA notices were regularly distributed to mission staff and prominently displayed in communal spaces in the IZD Tower. OIG also found that the Ambassador and the DCM advocated and modeled DEIA standards. Mission personnel commented favorably on the Ambassador's presentation at a Vienna Tri-Mission DEIA event, his engagement with the Vienna chapter of the International Gender Champions organization, and his commitment to incorporating DEIA issues into the mission's overall foreign policy agenda whenever possible.

## **Developing and Mentoring Foreign Service Professionals**

At the time of the inspection, USOSCE did not have first- or second-tour employees.

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<sup>9</sup> This section of the FAM was removed in July 2023, after fieldwork for this inspection concluded. These principles are still incorporated in other Department guidance, including 3 FAM 1212.

<sup>10</sup> Cable 21 STATE 60514, "Policy Statements on Diversity and Inclusion and Equal Employment Opportunity and Harassment," June 11, 2021.

## POLICY AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

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OIG reviewed the leadership and management, policy engagement and coordination, reporting, and Leahy vetting<sup>11</sup> functions of the Political Section, the Arms Control Section, the Office of Resource Management, and the Public Diplomacy Section. As described below, OIG found their work closely aligned with the IMS and generally complied with Department standards.

### Political Section

OIG found the Political Section, composed of 10 U.S. direct-hire and 2 LE staff members, closely aligned its work with the IMS and Department priorities. A primary focus of the section was holding Russia accountable for its actions in Ukraine, most notably through its drafting of public statements delivered by the Ambassador at the weekly OSCE Permanent Council meetings that called out Moscow's violation of OSCE principles and refuted Russia's disinformation.<sup>12</sup> OIG found that Washington consumers were pleased with the quality of the section's reporting. In addition, the section cooperated closely with Department offices on a range of issues including human trafficking, gender-based violence, and cybersecurity. Section staff have faced a heavy workload and consistently high operational tempo since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

### Arms Control Section

An Arms Control Counselor and a Deputy Counselor, both Foreign Service officers, led the Arms Control Section. In addition, the section included a direct-hire administrative assistant and three non-Department staff. Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine halted some OSCE arms control activities such as work to update the Vienna Document, a mechanism in which OSCE participating states agree to inspections and information exchanges to ensure the transparency of their armed forces and military activities.<sup>13</sup> However, section staff remained fully occupied in leading the mission's participation at the OSCE Forum for Security Cooperation, which seeks to increase stability in Europe through confidence-building measures, such as the exchange of military information and a code of conduct on the control of security forces. The section also continued work on required annual notifications under existing arms control agreements. OIG found the Arms Control Section maintained a good relationship with the Department's Bureau

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<sup>11</sup> The Leahy Amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 prohibits the United States from furnishing certain assistance to a unit of a foreign security force if the Department has credible information that the unit has committed a gross violation of human rights. Leahy vetting is the process of determining if the Department has credible information that units or individuals proposed to benefit from certain assistance have committed a gross violation of human rights. See 22 U.S.C. § 2378d and 9 FAM 303.8-5(B). The Department also helps implement a similar law applicable to "amounts made available to the Department of Defense" for assistance to foreign security forces. See 10 U.S.C. § 362.

<sup>12</sup> The USOSCE website includes links to statements by the USOSCE Ambassador and other OSCE members. See <https://osce.usmission.gov/news-events/statements>.

<sup>13</sup> For additional information on the Vienna Document, see the OSCE website at: <https://www.osce.org/fsc/74528>. The 2022 U.S. Statement for the Vienna Document Joint PC-FSC Chapter III Meeting can be found on the OSCE website at: <https://osce.usmission.gov/u-s-statement-for-the-vienna-document-joint-pc-fsc-chapter-iii-meeting-2>.

of Arms Control, Verification, and Compliance. The section also cooperated closely with the Political Section on security-related issues, including the drafting of relevant U.S. statements at OSCE Permanent Council meetings.

## **Office of Resource Management**

The Office of Resource Management (ORM), composed of the Director, one eligible family member, and two LE staff members, worked closely with the Department to oversee assessed and voluntary contributions<sup>14</sup> to OSCE.<sup>15</sup>

ORM led a process to allocate voluntary contributions to OSCE extra-budgetary programs to advance U.S. interests, including in Ukraine. The ability of the United States and other OSCE donors to use extra-budgetary contributions to fund work in Ukraine allows the OSCE to do work to address both short-term security needs arising from Russia's invasion and longer-term capacity building activities. These efforts are important, as Russia blocked consensus to renew the mandate of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission for Ukraine in March 2022.<sup>16</sup>

In 2022, the office, with Department approval, allocated<sup>17</sup> almost \$12 million to three primary activity areas: support for Ukraine (\$7.16 million); OSCE field operations, including program offices and missions in OSCE participating states (\$1.62 million); and OSCE activities that address economic and environmental matters, transnational threats, and human rights (\$3.16 million). Included in the amount allocated for Ukraine support was funding to establish the new OSCE Support Programme for Ukraine.<sup>18</sup> The Political Section was fully involved in ORM's contribution allocation process and generated ideas for new projects, such as a second phase of an OSCE-wide border security management program to detect forged documents.

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<sup>14</sup> As described in the Federal Assistance Directive, a voluntary contribution is discretionary financial assistance provided pursuant to a contribution authority. It provides funds to organizations within the scope of the authority, such as Foreign Public Entities (FPEs), to directly support the activities of the organization, or sustain the general budget and operations of the organization. Federal Assistance Directive (October 2022), Chapter 3, Section K.2.

<sup>15</sup> As described in the Federal Assistance Directive, an assessed contribution refers to funding provided to meet annual obligations of membership in international multilateral organizations, typically pursuant to treaties ratified pursuant to the advice and consent of the Senate or otherwise authorized by specific acts of Congress. As a general matter, foreign public entities that receive assessed and voluntary contributions are not expected to subject their books and records to inspection by officials of each country making an award or contribution to the entity. FAD, Chapter 3, Sections K and K.3.

<sup>16</sup> The focus of that mission, started in March 2014 after Russia's first invasion of Ukraine, was to observe and report on the security situation in Ukraine and to facilitate dialogue to all parties in the conflict.

<sup>17</sup> These figures reflect USOSCE's allocations and not obligations. See Table 1 for obligation information. According to 4 FAH-3 H-113.2a(2), an allocation is the amount of budgetary authority from one agency, bureau, or account (called the parent appropriation or fund) that is set aside in a transfer appropriation account to carry out the purposes of the parent appropriation or fund. Funds must be allocated before they can be obligated.

<sup>18</sup> The OSCE Support Programme for Ukraine was launched on November 1, 2022, to address the immediate challenges to civilians posed by the war against Ukraine and to support the long-term democratic and social resilience of its institutions and civil society. See <https://www.osce.org/support-programme-for-ukraine>.

The United States' FY 2022 contributions—both assessed and voluntary contributions—to the OSCE are shown in Table 1, below. Appendix B details the U.S. contributions for Ukraine-related OSCE projects.

**Table 1: U.S. Contributions to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe**

<b>Contributions</b>	<b>Assessed Contributions*</b>	<b>Voluntary Contributions*</b>	<b>Total*</b>
Other OSCE Regions	\$20,343,140	\$12,289,309	\$32,632,449
Ukraine	\$3,414,591	\$3,105,178	\$6,519,769
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$23,757,731</b>	<b>\$15,394,486</b>	<b>\$39,152,217</b>

\* FY 2022 obligations in U.S. dollars.

Source: OIG generated from data provided by the Bureau of International Organization Affairs.

ORM also led an internal process to informally evaluate whether OSCE extra-budgetary programs to which the United States contributes were implemented in accordance with their intended policy goals.<sup>19</sup> This process included a review by ORM and Political Section staff of quarterly progress reports submitted by implementers to the OSCE Secretariat with a focus on program activities. The reviewers then completed an evaluation form and identified any questions or concerns to be discussed with the implementers. Among the questions included in the evaluation form are what the project had accomplished so far, whether the project managers did what they said they would do in the promised timeframe, whether the project goals matched the U.S. government's objectives, and whether there were obvious signs of mismanaged funds or resources. In addition, mission staff, including the Ambassador, periodically visited OSCE field missions to observe their work.

## Public Diplomacy

OIG reviewed the Public Diplomacy Section's strategic planning and reporting, section leadership, resource and knowledge management, grants administration, and media engagement. Section staff told OIG that since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, they spent approximately 80 percent of their time on Ukraine issues. Overall, OIG determined public diplomacy operations and programs generally complied with Department standards.

The Public Diplomacy Section focused on media engagement, including traditional media interviews and social media messaging, in accordance with guidance in 10 FAH-1 H-060. The section supported an active Ambassador, one of the Department's leading interlocutors on Russia and Ukraine, and managed extensive press engagements, including more than 100 interviews for the Ambassador from February 2022 to May 2023. In addition, the section

<sup>19</sup> U.S. financial contributions to OSCE extra-budgetary programs are transferred directly to OSCE, which then uses the monies—often in combination with contributions from other countries to the same programs—to directly fund and administer program implementation. The United States has no formal authority over, or responsibility for, the implementers, who instead are accountable to OSCE. Accordingly, OIG did not inspect any financial reports or other recordkeeping generated by the program implementers.

supported weekly OSCE Permanent Council meetings, coordinating closely with the Political Section and the Front Office.

Consistent with the specialized focus of a multilateral mission, the section managed nine active grants. OIG reviewed all nine grants (total value \$83,608) issued from October 1, 2020, to September 30, 2022, and found they generally complied with the Federal Assistance Directive.<sup>20</sup> OIG determined the grants had clear public diplomacy objectives and directly supported the mission's goals, in particular the goal to maintain support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. However, the Office of the Procurement Executive told OIG the section did not close out 36 grant files as required.<sup>21</sup> Because the grants officer and grants officer representatives started addressing this issue during the inspection, OIG did not make a recommendation regarding this issue.

### **Spotlight on Success: Innovative Strategic Planning**

The Public Affairs Officer allocated 30 minutes of each week's hour-long staff meeting to discuss an aspect of strategic planning and how to apply it to the section's public diplomacy initiatives. She leveraged strategic planning knowledge from a previous tour and used logic models to lead the section through a review of its own initiatives to ensure staff members fully understood mission goals, double checked the section's activities directly supported mission goals, and refined initiatives as necessary. Although the section was consumed with day-to-day work, the Public Affairs Officer's insistence on strategic planning each week fostered collaboration and a team approach, kept mission goals at the forefront of public diplomacy activities, and streamlined the Public Diplomacy Implementation Plan and IMS processes.

## **INFORMATION MANAGEMENT**

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Concurrent with the inspection of Embassy Vienna, OIG reviewed USOSCE's computer network operations, information systems and administration of mobile computing devices, mail and pouch services, cyber security practices, records management, telephone, and emergency communications systems. OIG determined USOSCE's information management program and services generally met day-to-day computing and communications needs, with the exception described below.

### ***Records Retirement Practices Did Not Comply With Department Standards***

The mission's records retirement practices did not comply with Department records management standards. According to the Department's 2023 Global Information Services Annual Post Retirement Report, USOSCE has not consistently retired its program records,

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<sup>20</sup> The Department's Federal Assistance Directive establishes internal guidance, policies, and procedures for all domestic and overseas grant-making bureaus, offices, and posts administering federal financial assistance. It is updated annually by the Bureau of Administration's Office of the Procurement Executive. FAD, Chapter 1, Section A and Summary of Federal Award Requirements.

<sup>21</sup> FAD, Chapter 5.

although it did retire chief of mission records from 2019 to 2021 and DCM records from 2013 to 2017. Department standards in 5 FAM 451b and c require overseas posts to maintain an active, continuing records retirement program that ensures records are retired in accordance with records disposition schedules. OIG determined this internal control issue occurred due to mission employees being unfamiliar with records retirement requirements. The lack of an effective records retirement program increases the risk of loss of important data and historical records and could affect the Department's and the mission's ability to conduct policy analysis, decision making, and archival research.

**Recommendation 2:** The U.S. Mission to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe should retire its records in accordance with Department records management standards. (Action: USOSCE)

## RECOMMENDATIONS

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OIG provided a draft of this report to Department stakeholders for their review and comment on the findings and recommendations. OIG issued the following recommendations to The U.S. Mission to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. The mission's complete responses can be found in Appendix B. The mission also provided technical comments that were incorporated into the report, as appropriate.

**Recommendation 1:** The U.S. Mission to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe should require the Deputy Chief of Mission to attend International Cooperative Administrative Support Services Council meetings, in accordance with Department guidance. (Action: USOSCE)

**Management Response:** In its December 13, 2023, response, the U.S. Mission to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe concurred with this recommendation.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that the Deputy Chief of Mission attended International Cooperative Administrative Support Services Council meetings, in accordance with Department guidance.

**Recommendation 2:** The U.S. Mission to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe should retire its records in accordance with Department records management standards. (Action: USOSCE)

**Management Response:** In its December 13, 2023, response, the U.S. Mission to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe concurred with this recommendation.

**OIG Reply:** OIG considers the recommendation resolved. The recommendation can be closed when OIG receives and accepts documentation that the U.S. Mission to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe retired its records in accordance with Department records management standards.

## PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS

Agency/Section/Title	Name	Arrival Date
<b>Chiefs of Mission:</b>		
Ambassador	Michael Carpenter	11/2021
Deputy Chief of Mission	Courtney Austrian	08/2020
<b>Chiefs of Sections:</b>		
Political	Elisabeth Rosenstock-Siller	08/2020
Arms Control	Daniel Wartko	09/2022
Office of Resource Management	Tracey Newell	08/2021
Public Diplomacy	Maren Payne-Holmes	06/2022
Analytical Support Group	Timothy Brys	06/2021
Joint Management Office	Timothy Hanway	08/2021
Regional Security Office	Brendan Murray	07/2022
<b>Other Agency Representatives:</b>		
Helsinki Commission	Shannon Simrell	10/2019

**Source:** Generated by OIG from data provided by USOSCE.

## APPENDIX A: OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

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This inspection was conducted from March 13 to July 13, 2023, in accordance with the Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation, as issued in 2020 by the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency, and the Inspections Handbook, as issued by the Office of Inspector General (OIG) for the Department and the U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM).

### Objectives and Scope

The Office of Inspections provides the Secretary of State, the Chief Executive Officer of USAGM, and Congress with systematic and independent evaluations of the operations of the Department and USAGM. Inspections cover three broad areas, consistent with Section 209 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980:

- **Policy Implementation:** whether policy goals and objectives are being effectively achieved and U.S. interests are accurately and effectively represented; and whether all elements of an office or mission are being adequately coordinated.
- **Resource Management:** whether resources are being used and managed with maximum efficiency, effectiveness, and economy; and whether financial transactions and accounts are properly conducted, maintained, and reported.
- **Management Controls:** whether the administration of activities and operations meets the requirements of applicable laws and regulations; whether internal management controls have been instituted to ensure quality of performance and reduce the likelihood of mismanagement; and whether instances of fraud, waste, or abuse exist and whether adequate steps for detection, correction, and prevention have been taken.

### Methodology

OIG used a risk-based approach to prepare for this inspection. OIG conducted portions of the inspection remotely and relied on audio- and video-conferencing tools in addition to in-person interviews with Department and other personnel. OIG also reviewed pertinent records; circulated surveys and compiled the results; and reviewed the substance of this report and its findings and recommendations with offices, individuals, and organizations affected by the review. OIG used professional judgment and analyzed physical, documentary, and testimonial evidence to develop its findings, conclusions, and actionable recommendations.

This inspection was conducted consistent with the [Joint Strategic Oversight Plan for Ukraine Response](#) and subsequent [report](#) to Congress on joint oversight released in March 2023 by the Inspectors General of the Departments of State, Defense, and the U.S. Agency for International Development.

## APPENDIX B: U.S. CONTRIBUTIONS TO UKRAINE-RELATED PROJECTS

**Table 1: U.S. Contributions to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe's (OSCE) Ukraine-Related Projects**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Assessed Contributions*</b>	<b>Voluntary Contributions*</b>
2022-2023 OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine	\$3,414,591	
To prevent and respond to trafficking in human beings amid humanitarian crisis in Ukraine		\$1,000,000
To publicly report serious violations of human rights in Ukraine resulting from the Russian invasion		\$109,000
To provide humanitarian assistance to Ukrainian civilians in response to the Russian invasion, including the procurement of first aid kits, medical supplies, hygiene products and folding beds		\$2,000,000
To build Ukrainian humanitarian mine action capacity		\$(476)**
Discussions/workshops organized by the OSCE at the Aspen Ideas Festival in Odessa, Ukraine on August 21-23, 2021		\$(2,178)**
Discussions organized by the OSCE at the Lviv Media Forum, August 26-28, 2021, as promotion of media self-regulation and to evaluate transformation of journalism in the era of social media		\$(1,168)**
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,414,591</b>	<b>\$3,105,178</b>

\* FY 2022 obligations in U.S. dollars.

\*\* Amounts reflect FY 2022 de-obligation of funds previously obligated, including in prior fiscal years.

**Source:** OIG generated from data provided by the Bureau of International Organization Affairs.

## APPENDIX C: MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

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UNITED STATES MISSION  
TO THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE  
VIENNA, AUSTRIA

December 13, 2023

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THROUGH: EUR A/S James O'Brien

TO: OIG – Arne Baker, Acting Assistant Inspector General for Inspections

FROM: USOSCE – DCM Katherine Brucker

SUBJECT: Response to Draft OIG Report on the Inspection of the U.S. Mission to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

USOSCE has reviewed the draft OIG inspection report. We provide the following comments in response to the recommendations provided by OIG:

**OIG Recommendation 1:** The U.S. Mission to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe should require the Deputy Chief of Mission to attend International Cooperative Administrative Support Services Council meetings, in accordance with Department guidance.

**Management Response:** USOSCE concurs with this recommendation. The Tri-Mission Joint Management Office, which organizes ICASS meetings, has already put in place measures to ensure that all Tri-Mission DCMs attend ICASS meetings. All three of us participated in the most recent meeting on November 16, 2023

**OIG Recommendation 2:** The U.S. Mission to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe should retire its records in accordance with Department records management standards.

**Management Response:** USOSCE concurs with this recommendation. We note, however, that some records the OIG cited as not retired were in fact retired, per the attached email. Our OMSes will retire the remaining files by the end of the calendar year.

The point of contact for this memorandum is Katherine Brucker.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

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DCM	Deputy Chief of Mission
DEIA	Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunity
FAH	Foreign Affairs Handbook
FAM	Foreign Affairs Manual
IMS	Integrated Mission Strategy
LE	Locally Employed
ORM	Office of Resource Management
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
UNVIE	U.S. Mission to International Organizations in Vienna
USOSCE	U.S. Mission to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

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## **HELP FIGHT**

### FRAUD, WASTE, AND ABUSE

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